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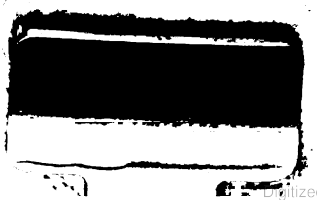
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HISTORY

OF THE

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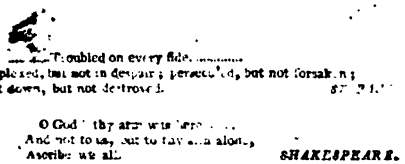
AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

INTERSPERSED WITH

Biographical, Political and Moral Observations.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY MRS. MERCY WARREN,
OF PLYMOUTH, (MASS.)



VOL. I.

BOSTON:
PRINTED BY MANNING AND LORING,
FOR E. LARKIN, No. 47, CORNHILL.
1805.

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District of Massachusetts, to wit.

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the eleventh day of February, in the thirtieth year of the independence of the United States of America, MERCY WARREN, of the said district, hath deposited in this office the title of a Book, the right whereof she claims as author, in the words following, *to wit*:—"HISTORY *of the Rise, Progress and* "*Termination of the* AMERICAN REVOLUTION. *Interspersed with* "*Biographical, Political and Moral Observations. In Three Volumes.* "*By Mrs.* MERCY WARREN, *of Plymouth, (Mass.)*"

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AN ADDRESS

TO THE

INHABITANTS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

AT a period when every manly arm was occupied, and every trait of talent or activity engaged, either in the cabinet or the field, apprehenſive, that amidſt the ſudden convulſions, crowded ſcenes, and rapid changes, that flowed in quick ſucceſſion, many circumſtances might eſcape the more buſy and active members of ſociety, I have been induced to improve the leiſure Providence had lent, to record as they paſſed, in the following pages, the new and unexperienced events exhibited in a land previouſly bleſſed with peace, liberty, ſimplicity, and virtue.

As circumſtances were collected, facts related, and characters drawn, many years antecedent to any hiſtory ſince publiſhed, relative to the diſmemberment of the colonies, and to American independence, there are few alluſions to any later writers.

Connected by nature, friendſhip, and every ſocial tie, with many of the firſt patriots, and moſt influential characters on the continent; in the habits of confidential and epiſtolary intercourſe with ſeveral gentlemen employed abroad in the moſt diſtinguiſhed ſtations, and with others ſince elevated to the higheſt grades of rank

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and diſtinction, I had the beſt means of information, through a long period that the colonies were in ſuſpenſe, waiting the operation of foreign courts, and the ſucceſs of their own enterpriſing ſpirit.

The ſolemnity that covered every countenance, when contemplating the ſword uplifted, and the horrors of civil war ruſhing to habitations not inured to ſcenes of rapine and miſery; even to the quiet cottage, where only concord and affection had reigned; ſtimulated to obſervation a mind that had not yielded to the aſſertion, that all political attentions lay out of the road of female life.

It is true there are certain appropriate duties aſſigned to each ſex; and doubtleſs it is the more peculiar province of maſculine ſtrength, not only to repel the bold invader of the rights of his country and of mankind, but in the nervous ſtyle of manly eloquence, to deſcribe the blood-ſtained field, and relate the ſtory of ſlaughtered armies.

Senſible of this, the trembling heart has recoiled at the magnitude of the undertaking, and the hand often ſhrunk back from the taſk; yet, recollecting that every domeſtic enjoyment depends on the unimpaired poſſeſſion of civil and religious liberty, that a concern for the welfare of ſociety ought equally to glow in every human breaſt, the work was not relinquiſhed. The moſt intereſting circumſtances were collected, active characters portrayed, the principles of the times developed, and the changes marked; nor need it cauſe a bluſh to acknowledge, a detail was preſerved with a view of tranſmitting it to the riſing youth of my country, ſome of them in infancy, others in the European world, while the moſt intereſting events lowered over their native land.

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Conſcious that truth has been the guide of my pen, and candor, as well as juſtice, the accompaniment of my wiſhes through every page, I can ſay, with an ingenious writer, "I have uſed my pen with the liberty "of one, who neither hopes nor fears, nor has any in- "tereſt in the ſucceſs or failure of any party, and who "ſpeaks to poſterity—perhaps very far remote."

The ſympathizing heart has looked abroad and wept the many victims of affliction, inevitably ſuch in conſequence of civil feuds and the concomitant miſeries of war, either foreign or domeſtic. The reverſes of life, and the inſtability of the world, have been viewed on the point of both extremes. Their deluſory nature and character, have been contemplated as becomes the philoſopher and the chriſtian: the one teaches us from the analogies of nature, the neceſſity of changes, decay, and death; the other ſtrengthens the mind to meet them with the rational hope of revival and renovation.

Several years have elapſed ſince the hiſtorical tracts, now with diffidence ſubmitted to the public, have been arranged in their preſent order. Local circumſtances, the decline of health, temporary deprivations of ſight, the death of the moſt amiable of children, "the ſhaft "flew thrice, and thrice my peace was ſlain," have ſometimes prompted to throw by the pen in deſpair. I draw a veil over the woe-fraught ſcenes that have pierced my own heart. "While the ſoul was melting in- "wardly, it has endeavoured to ſupport outwardly, with "decency and dignity, thoſe accidents which admit of "no redreſs, and to exert that ſpirit that enables to get "the better of thoſe that do."

Not indifferent to the opinion of the world, nor ſervilely courting its ſmiles, no further apology is offer-

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ed for the attempt, though many may be neceſſary, for the incomplete execution of a deſign, that had rectitude for its baſis, and a beneficent regard for the civil and religious rights of mankind, for its motive.

The liberal-minded will peruſe with candor, rather than criticiſe with ſeverity; nor will they think it neceſſary, that any apology ſhould be offered, for ſometimes introducing characters nearly connected with the author of the following annals; as they were early and zealouſly attached to the public cauſe, uniform in their principles, and conſtantly active in the great ſcenes that produced the revolution, and obtained independence for their country, truth precludes that reſerve which might have been proper on leſs important occaſions, and forbids to paſs over in ſilence the names of ſuch as expired before the conflict was finiſhed, or have ſince retired from public ſcenes. The hiſtorian has never laid aſide the tenderneſs of the ſex or the friend; at the ſame time, ſhe has endeavoured, on all occaſions, that the ſtricteſt veracity ſhould govern her heart, and the moſt exact impartiality be the guide of her pen.

If the work ſhould be ſo far uſeful or entertaining, as to obtain the ſanction of the generous and virtuous part of the community, I cannot but be highly gratified and amply rewarded for the effort, ſoothed at the ſame time with the idea, that the motives were juſtifiable in the eye of Omniſcience. Then, if it ſhould not eſcape the remarks of the critic, or the cenſure of party, I ſhall feel no wound to my ſenſibility, but repoſe on my pillow as quietly as ever,—

> "While all the diſtant din the world can keep,
> "Rolls o'er my grotto, and but ſoothes my ſleep."

Before this addreſs to my countrymen is cloſed, I beg leave to obſerve, that as a new century has dawned

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upon us, the mind is naturally led to contemplate the great events that have run parallel with, and have juſt cloſed the laſt. From the revolutionary ſpirit of the times, the vaſt improvements in ſcience, arts, and agriculture, the boldneſs of genius that marks the age, the inveſtigation of new theories, and the changes in the political, civil, and religious characters of men, ſucceeding generations have reaſon to expect ſtill more aſtoniſhing exhibitions in the next. In the mean time, Providence has clearly pointed out the duties of the preſent generation, particularly the paths which Americans ought to tread. The United States form a young republic, a confederacy which ought ever to be cemented by a union of intereſts and affection, under the influence of thoſe principles which obtained their independence. Theſe have indeed, at certain periods, appeared *to* be in the wane; but let them never be eradicated, by the jarring intereſts of parties, jealouſies of the ſiſter ſtates, or the ambition of individuals! It has been obſerved, by a writer of celebrity,* that "that "people, government, and conſtitution is the freeſt, which "makes the beſt proviſion for the enacting of expedient "and ſalutary laws." May this truth be evinced to all ages, by the wiſe and ſalutary laws that ſhall be enacted in the federal legiſlature of America!

May the hands of the executive of their own choice, be ſtrengthened more by the unanimity and affection of the people, than by the dread of penal inflictions, or any reſtraints that might repreſs free inquiry, relative to the principles of their own government, and the conduct of its adminiſtrators! The world is now viewing America, as experimenting a new ſyſtem of government, a FEDERAL REPUBLIC, including a territory to which the Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland

* Paley's Moral Philoſophy.

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bear little proportion. The practicability of ſupporting ſuch a ſyſtem, has been doubted by ſome; if ſhe ſucceeds, it will refute the aſſertion, that none but ſmall ſtates are adapted to republican government; if ſhe does not, and the union ſhould be diſſolved, ſome ambitious ſon of Columbia, or ſome foreign adventurer, allured by the prize, may wade to empire through ſeas of blood, or the friends of monarchy may ſee a number of petty deſpots, ſtretching their ſceptres over the diſjointed parts of the continent. Thus by the mandate of a ſingle ſovereign, the degraded ſubjects of one ſtate, under the bannerets of royalty, may be dragged to ſheathe their ſwords in the boſoms of the inhabitants of another.

The ſtate of the public mind, appears at preſent to be prepared to weigh theſe reflections with ſolemnity, and to receive with pleaſure an effort to trace the origin of the American revolution, to review the characters that effected it, and to juſtify the principles of the defection and final ſeparation from the parent ſtate. With an expanded heart, beating with high hopes of the continued freedom and proſperity of America, the writer indulges a modeſt expectation, that the following pages will be peruſed with kindneſs and candor: this ſhe claims, both in conſideration of her ſex, the uprightneſs of her intentions, and the fervency of her wiſhes for the happineſs of all the human race.

MERCY WARREN.

PLYMOUTH, (MASS.)
MARCH, 1805.

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THE

RISE, PROGRESS, &c.

OF THE

AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

CHAPTER I.

Introductory Obſervations.

HISTORY, the depoſite of crimes, and the record of every thing diſgraceful or honorary to mankind, requires a juſt knowledge of character, to inveſtigate the ſources of action; a clear comprehenſion, to review the combination of cauſes; and preciſion of language, to detail the events that have produced the moſt remarkable revolutions.

To analyze the ſecret ſprings that have effected the progreſſive changes in ſociety; to trace the origin of the various modes of government, the conſequent improvements in ſcience, in morality, or the national tincture that

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CHAP. I.

marks the manners of the people under deſpotic or more liberal forms, is a bold and adventurous work.

The ſtudy of the human character opens at once a beautiful and a deformed picture of the ſoul. We there find a noble principle implanted in the nature of man, that pants for diſtinction. This principle operates in every boſom, and when kept under the control of reaſon, and the influence of humanity, it produces the moſt benevolent effects. But when the checks of conſcience are thrown aſide, or the moral ſenſe weakened by the ſudden acquiſition of wealth or power, humanity is obſcured, and if a favorable coincidence of circumſtances permits, this love of diſtinction often exhibits the moſt mortifying inſtances of profligacy, tyranny, and the wanton exerciſe of arbitrary ſway. Thus when we look over the theatre of human action, ſcrutinize the windings of the heart, and ſurvey the tranſactions of man from the earlieſt to the preſent period, it muſt be acknowledged that ambition and avarice are the leading ſprings which generally actuate the reſtleſs mind. From theſe primary ſources of corruption have ariſen all the rapine and confuſion, the depredation and ruin, that have ſpread diſtreſs over the face of the earth from the days of Nimrod to Ceſar, and from Ceſar to an arbitrary prince of the houſe of Brunſwick.

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The indulgence of theſe turbulent paſſions has depopulated cities, laid waſte the fineſt territories, and turned the beauty and harmony of the lower creation into an aceldama. Yet candor muſt bear honorable teſtimony to many ſignal inſtances of diſintereſted merit among the children of men; thus it is not poſſible to pronounce decidedly on the character of the politician or the ſtateſman till the winding up of the drama. To evince the truth of this remark, it is needleſs to adduce innumerable inſtances of deception both in ancient and modern ſtory. It is enough to obſerve, that the ſpecious Auguſtus eſtabliſhed himſelf in empire by the appearance of juſtice, clemency, and moderation, while the ſavage Nero ſhameleſsly weltered in the blood of the citizens; but the ſole object of each was to become the ſovereign of life and property, and to govern the Roman world with a deſpotic hand.

Time may unlock the cabinets of princes, unfold the ſecret negociations of ſtateſmen, and hand down the immortal characters of dignified worth, or the blackened traits of finiſhed villany in exaggerated colours. But truth is moſt likely to be exhibited by the general ſenſe of contemporaries, when the feelings of the heart can be expreſſed without ſuffering itſelf to be diſguiſed by the prejudices of the man. Yet it is not eaſy to convey to poſterity a juſt idea of the embarraſſed ſituation of the weſtern world,

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CHAP. I.

previous to the rupture with Britain; the diſmemberment of the empire, and the loſs of the moſt induſtrious, flouriſhing, and perhaps virtuous colonies, ever planted by the hand of man.

The progreſs of the American Revolution has been ſo rapid, and ſuch the alteration of manners, the blending of characters, and the new train of ideas that almoſt univerſally prevail, that the principles which animated to the nobleſt exertions have been nearly annihilated. Many who firſt ſtepped forth in vindication of the rights of human nature are forgotten, and the cauſes which involved the thirteen colonies in confuſion and blood are ſcarcely known, amidſt the rage of accumulation and the taſte for expenſive pleaſures that have ſince prevailed; a taſte that has aboliſhed that mediocrity which once ſatisfied, and that contentment which long ſmiled in every countenance. Luxury, the companion of young acquired wealth, is uſually the conſequence of oppoſition to, or cloſe connexion with, opulent commercial ſtates. Thus the hurry of ſpirits, that ever attends the eager purſuit of fortune and a paſſion for ſplendid enjoyment, leads to forgetfulneſs; and thus the inhabitants of America ceaſe to look back with due gratitude and reſpect on the fortitude and virtue of their anceſtors, who, through difficulties almoſt inſurmountable, planted them in a happy ſoil. But the hiſtorian and the philoſopher will ever venerate the memory of thoſe

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pious and independent gentlemen, who, after ſuffering innumerable impoſitions, reſtrictions, and penalties, leſs for political, than theological opinions, left England, not as adventurers for wealth or fame, but for the quiet enjoyment of religion and liberty.

The love of domination and an uncontrolled luſt of arbitrary power have prevailed among all nations, and perhaps in proportion to the degrees of civilization. They have been equally conſpicuous in the decline of Roman virtue, and in the dark pages of Britiſh ſtory. It was theſe principles that overturned that ancient republic. It was theſe principles that frequently involved England in civil feuds. It was the reſiſtance to them that brought one of their monarchs to the block, and ſtruck another from his throne. It was the prevalence of them that drove the firſt ſettlers of America from elegant habitations and affluent circumſtances, to ſeek an aſylum in the cold and uncultivated regions of the weſtern world. Oppreſſed in Britain by deſpotic kings, and perſecuted by prelatic fury, they fled to a diſtant country, where the deſires of men were bounded by the wants of nature; where civilization had not created thoſe artificial cravings which too frequently break over every moral and religious tie for their gratification.

The tyranny of the Stuart race has long been proverbial in Engliſh ſtory: their efforts

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CHAP. I.

to eſtabliſh an arbitrary ſyſtem of government began with the weak and bigoted reign of James the firſt, and were continued until the exciſion of his ſon Charles. The conteſts between the Britiſh parliament and this unfortunate monarch aroſe to ſuch an height, as to augur an alarming defection of many of the beſt ſubjects in England. Great was their uneaſineſs at the ſtate of public affairs, the arbitrary ſtretch of power, and the obſtinacy of king Charles, who purſued his own deſpotic meaſures in ſpite of the oppoſition of a number of gentlemen in parliament attached to the liberties and privileges of Engliſhmen. Thus a ſpirit of emigration adopted in the preceding reign began to ſpread with great rapidity through the nation. Some gentlemen endowed with talents to defend their rights by the moſt cogent and reſiſtleſs arguments, were among the number who had taken the alarming reſolution of ſeeking an aſylum far from their natal ſoil, where they might enjoy the rights and privileges they claimed, and which they conſidered on the eve of annihilation at home. Among theſe were Oliver Cromwell, afterwards protector, and a number of other gentlemen of diſtinguiſhed name, who had actually engaged to embark for New-England. This was a circumſtance ſo alarming to the court, that they were ſtopped by an order of government, and by royal edict all further emigration was forbidden. The ſpirit of colonization was not however much

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impeded, nor the growth of the young plantations prevented, by the arbitrary reſolutions of the court. It was but a ſhort time after this effort to check them, before numerous Engliſh emigrants were ſpread along the borders of the Atlantic from Plymouth to Virginia.

The independency with which theſe coloniſts acted; the high promiſe of future advantage from the beauty and fertility of the country; and, as was obſerved ſoon after, "the proſperous "ſtate of their ſettlements, made it to be con-"ſidered by the heads of the puritan party in "England, many of whom were men of the "firſt rank, fortune and abilities, as the ſanctu-"ary of liberty."* The order above alluded to, indeed prevented the embarkation of the Lords Say and Brook, the Earl of Warwick, of Hampden, Pym, and many others, who, deſpairing of recovering their civil and religious liberty on their native ſhore, had determined to ſecure it by a retreat to the New World, as it was then called. Patents were purchaſed by others, within a ſhort period after the preſent, who planted the thirteen American colonies with a ſucceſsful hand. Many circumſtances concurred to awaken the ſpirit of adventure, and to draw out men, inured to ſofter habits, to encounter the difficulties and dangers of planting themſelves and families in the wilderneſs.

* Univerſal Hiſtory.

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The ſpirit of party had thrown accumulated advantages into the hands of Charles the ſecond, after his reſtoration. The diviſions and animoſities at court rendered it more eaſy for him to purſue the ſame ſyſtem which his father had adopted. Amidſt the rage for pleaſure, and the licentious manners that prevailed in his court, the complaiſance of one party, the fears of another, and the wearineſs of all, of the diſſenſions and difficulties that had ariſen under the protectorſhip of Cromwell, facilitated the meaſures of the high monarchiſts, who continually improved their advantages to enhance the prerogatives of the crown. The weak and bigoted conduct of his brother James increaſed the general uneaſineſs of the nation, until his abdication. Thus, through every ſucceſſive reign of this line of the Stuarts, the colonies gained additional ſtrength, by continual emigrations to the young American ſettlements.

The firſt colony of Europeans, permanently planted in North America, was by an handful of roving ſtrangers, ſickly, and neceſſitated to debark on the firſt land, where there was any promiſe of a quiet ſubſiſtence. Amidſt the deſpotiſm of the firſt branch of the houſe of Stuart, on the throne of Britain, and the eccleſiaſtical perſecutions in England, which ſent many eminent characters abroad, a ſmall company of diſſenters from the national eſtabliſhment left England, under the paſtoral care of

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the pious and learned Mr. Robinſon, and reſided a ſhort time in Holland, which they left in the beginning of autumn, one thouſand ſix hundred and twenty.

After a long and hazardous voyage, they landed on the borders of an inhoſpitable wilderneſs, in the dreary month of December, amidſt the horrors of a North American winter.* They were at firſt received by the ſavage inhabitants of the country with a degree of ſimple humanity: They ſmoked with them the *calumet* of peace; purchaſed a tract of the uncultivated waſte; hutted on the frozen ſhore, ſheltered only by the lofty foreſt, that had been left for ages to thicken under the rude hand of time. From this ſmall beginning was laid the ſtable foundations of thoſe extenſive ſettlements, that have ſince ſpread over the faireſt quarter of the globe.

Virginia, indeed, had been earlier diſcovered by Sir Walter Raleigh, and a few men left there by him, to whom additions under various adventurers were afterwards made; but, by a ſeries of misfortunes and miſconduct, the plantation had fallen into ſuch diſorder and diſtreſs, that the enterpriſe was abandoned. The fate of thoſe left there by this great and good man has never been known with certainty: It is

* Appendix, Note, No. I.

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probable moſt of them were murdered by the ſavages; and the remnant, if any there were, became incorporated with the barbarous nations.

There was afterwards a more ſucceſsful effort for the ſettlement of a colony in Virginia. In the beginning of the ſeventeenth century Lord Delaware was appointed Governor, and with him a conſiderable number of emigrants arrived from England. But his health was not equal to a reſidence in a rude and uncultivated wilderneſs; he ſoon returned to his native country, but left his ſon, with Sir Thomas Gates and ſeveral other enterpriſing gentlemen, who purſued the project of an eſtabliſhment in Virginia, and began to build a town on James-River, in the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſix. Thus was that ſtate entitled to the preſcriptive term of the Old Dominion, which it ſtill retains. But their difficulties, misfortunes and diſappointments, long prevented any permanent conſtitution or ſtable government, and they ſcarcely deſerved the appellation of a regular colony, until a conſiderable time after the ſettlement in Plymouth, in one thouſand ſix hundred and twenty.

The diſcovery of the New World had opened a wide field of enterpriſe, and ſeveral other previous attempts had been made by Europeans to obtain ſettlements therein; yet little of a per-

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manent nature was effected, until the patience and perſeverance of the Leyden ſufferers laid the foundation of ſocial order.

This ſmall company of ſettlers, after wandering ſome time on the frozen ſhore, fixed themſelves at the bottom of the Maſſachuſetts Bay. Though diſpirited by innumerable diſcouraging circumſtances, they immediately entered into engagements with each other to form themſelves into a regular ſociety, and drew up a covenant, by which they bound themſelves to ſubmit to order and ſubordination.

Their juriſprudence was marked with wiſdom and dignity, and their ſimplicity and piety were diſplayed equally in the regulation of their police, the nature of their contracts, and the punctuality of obſervance. The old Plymouth colony remained for ſome time a diſtinct government. They choſe their own magiſtrates, independent of all foreign control; but a few years involved them with the Maſſachuſetts, of which, Boſton, more recently ſettled than Plymouth, was the capital.

From the local ſituation of a country, ſeparated by an ocean of a thouſand leagues from the parent ſtate, and ſurrounded by a world of ſavages, an immediate compact with the King of Great Britain was thought neceſſary. Thus, a charter was early granted, ſtipulating on the

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part of the crown, that the Maſſachuſetts ſhould have a legiſlative body within itſelf, compoſed of three branches, and ſubject to no control, except his Majeſty's negative, within a limited term, to any laws formed by their aſſembly that might be thought to militate with the general intereſt of the realm of England. The Governor was appointed by the crown, the repreſentative body, annually choſen by the people, and the council elected by the repreſentatives from the people at large.

Though more liberal charters were granted to ſome of the colonies, which, after the firſt ſettlement at Plymouth, rapidly ſpread over the face of this new diſcovered country, yet modes of government nearly ſimilar to that of Maſſachuſetts were eſtabliſhed in moſt of them, except Maryland and Pennſylvania, which were under the direction of particular proprietors. But the corrupt principles which had been faſhionable in the voluptuous and bigoted courts of the Stuarts, ſoon followed the emigrants in their diſtant retreat, and interrupted the eſtabliſhments of their civil police; which, it may be obſerved, were a mixture of Jewiſh theocracy, monarchic government, and the growing principles of republicaniſm, which had taken root in Britain as early as the days of Elizabeth.

It ſoon appeared that there was a ſtrong party in England, who wiſhed to govern the coloniſts

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with a rigorous hand. They diſcovered their inclinations by repeated attempts to procure a reviſion, an alteration, and a reſumption of charters, on the moſt frivolous pretences.

It is true, an indiſcreet zeal, with regard to ſeveral religious ſectaries, which had early introduced themſelves into the young ſettlements, gave a pretext to ſome ſeverities from the parent ſtate. But the conduct of the firſt planters of the American colonies has been held up by ſome ingenious writers in too ludicrous a light. Yet while we admire their perſevering and ſelf-denying virtues, we muſt acknowledge that the illiberality and weakneſs of ſome of their municipal regulations have caſt a ſhade over the memory of men, whoſe errors aroſe more from the faſhion of the times, and the dangers which threatened them from every ſide, than from any deficiency either in the head or the heart. But the treatment of the Quakers in the Maſſachuſetts can never be juſtified either by the principles of policy or humanity.* The demeanor of theſe people was, indeed, in many inſtances, not only ridiculous, but diſorderly and

* However cenſurable the early ſettlers in New England were, in their ſeverities towards the Quakers and other nonconformiſts, they might think their conduct in ſome degree ſanctioned by the example of their parent ſtate, and the rigours exerciſed in other parts of the European world at that time, againſt all denominations which differed from the religious eſtabliſhments of government.

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atrocious; yet an indelible ſtain will be left on the names of thoſe, who adjudged to impriſonment, confiſcation and death, a ſect made conſiderable only by oppoſition.

In the ſtory of the ſufferings of theſe enthuſiaſts, there has never been a juſt diſcrimination between the ſectaries denominated Quakers, who firſt viſited the New England ſettlements, and the aſſociates of the celebrated Penn, who, having received a patent from the crown of England, fixed his reſidence on the borders of the Delaware. He there reared, with aſtoniſhing rapidity, a flouriſhing, induſtrious colony, on the moſt benevolent principles. The equality of their condition, the mildneſs of their deportment, and the ſimplicity of their manners, encouraged the emigration of huſbandmen, artizans and manufacturers from all parts of Europe. Thus was this colony ſoon raiſed to diſtinguiſhed eminence, though under a proprietary government.* But the ſectaries that infeſted the more eaſtern territory were generally looſe, idle and refractory, aiming to introduce

* Mr. Penn publiſhed a ſyſtem of government, on which it has been obſerved, "that the introductory piece is perhaps the moſt extraordinary compound that ever was publiſhed, of enthuſiaſm, ſound policy, and good ſenſe." The author tells us, "It was adapted to the great end of all government, viz. to ſupport power in reverence with the people, and to ſecure the people from the abuſe of power." Mod. Un. Hiſt. Vol. 41. p. 5.

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confuſion and licentiouſneſs rather than the eſtabliſhment of any regular ſociety. Excluded from Boſton, and baniſhed the Maſſachuſetts, they repaired to a neighboring colony, leſs tenacious in religious opinion, by which the growth of Rhode Iſland and Providence Plantations was greatly facilitated.

The ſpirit of intolerance in the early ſtages of their ſettlements was not confined to the New England *puritans*, as they have in deriſion been ſtyled. In Virginia, Maryland, and ſome other colonies, where the votaries of the church of England were the ſtronger party, the diſſenters of every deſcription were perſecuted, with little leſs rigour than had been experienced by the Quakers from the Preſbyterians of the Maſſachuſetts. An act paſſed in the aſſembly of Virginia, in the early days of her legiſlation, making it penal "for any maſter of a veſſel to bring a "Quaker into the province." "The inhabitants "were inhibited from entertaining any perſon "of that denomination. They were impriſoned, "baniſhed, and treated with every mark of ſe- "verity ſhort of death."*

It is natural to ſuppoſe a ſociety of men who had ſuffered ſo much from a ſpirit of religious bigotry, would have ſtretched a lenient hand towards any who might differ from themſelves, either in mode or opinion, with regard to the

* Hiſtory of Virginia.

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worſhip of the Deity. But from a ſtrange propenſity in human nature to reduce every thing within the vortex of their own ideas, the ſame intolerant and perſecuting ſpirit, from which they had ſo recently fled, diſcovered itſelf in thoſe bold adventurers, who had braved the dangers of the ocean and planted themſelves in a wilderneſs, for the enjoyment of civil and religious liberty.

In the cool moments of reflection, both humanity and philoſophy revolt at the diabolical diſpoſition, that has prevailed in almoſt every country, to perſecute ſuch as either from education or principle, from caprice or cuſtom, refuſe to ſubſcribe to the religious creed of thoſe, who, by various adventitious circumſtances, have acquired a degree of ſuperiority or power.

It is rational to believe that the benevolent Author of nature deſigned univerſal happineſs as the baſis of his works. Nor is it unphiloſophical to ſuppoſe the difference in human ſentiment, and the variety of opinions among mankind, may conduce to this end. They may be permitted, in order to improve the faculty of thinking, to draw out the powers of the mind, to exerciſe the principles of candor, and learn us to wait, in a becoming manner, the full diſcloſure of the ſyſtem of divine government. Thus, probably, the variety in the formation of the human ſoul may appear to be

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ſuch, as to have rendered it impoſſible for mankind to think exactly in the ſame channel. The contemplative and liberal minded man muſt, therefore, bluſh for the weakneſs of his own ſpecies, when he ſees any of them endeavouring to circumſcribe the limits of virtue and happineſs within his own contracted ſphere, too often darkened by ſuperſtition and bigotry.

The modern improvements in ſociety, and the cultivation of reaſon, which has ſpread its benign influence over both the European and the American world, have nearly eradicated this perſecuting ſpirit; and we look back, in both countries, mortified and aſhamed of the illiberality of our anceſtors. Yet ſuch is the elaſticity of the human mind, that when it has been long bent beyond a certain line of propriety, it frequently flies off to the oppoſite extreme. Thus there may be danger, that in the enthuſiaſm for *toleration*, indifference to all religion may take place.* Perhaps few will deny that religion, viewed merely in a political light, is after all the beſt cement of ſociety, the great barrier of juſt government, and the only cer-

* Since theſe annals were written this obſervation has been fully verified in the impious ſentiments and conduct of ſeveral members of the national Convention of France, who, after the diſſolution of monarchy, and the abolition of the privileged orders, were equally zealous for the deſtruction of the altars of God, and the annihilation of all religion.

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tain reſtraint of the paſſions, thoſe dangerous inlets to licentiouſneſs and anarchy.

It has been obſerved by an ingenious writer, that there are proſelytes from atheiſm, but none from ſuperſtition. Would it not be more juſt to reverſe the obſervation? The narrowneſs of ſuperſtition frequently wears off, by an intercourſe with the world, and the ſubjects become uſeful members of ſociety. But the hardineſs of atheiſm ſets at defiance both human and divine laws, until the man is loſt to himſelf and to the world.

A curſory ſurvey of the religious ſtate of America, in the early ſtages of colonization, requires no apology. It is neceſſary to obſerve, the animoſities which aroſe among themſelves on external forms of worſhip, and different modes of thinking, were moſt unfortunate circumſtances for the infant ſettlements; more eſpecially while kept in continual alarm by the natives of the vaſt uncultivated wilds, who ſoon grew jealous of their new inmates. It is true, that Maſſaſoit, the principal chief of the north, had received the ſtrangers with the ſame mildneſs and hoſpitality that marked the conduct of Montezuma at the ſouth, on the arrival of the Spaniards in his territories. Perhaps the different demeanor of their ſons, Philip and Guatimozin, was not the reſult of more hoſtile or heroic diſpoſitions than their fathers poſſeſſed. It more probably aroſe from an apprehenſion of

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the invaſion of their rights, after time had given them a more perfect knowledge of the temper of their gueſts.

It may be a miſtake, that *man*, in a ſtate of nature, is more diſpoſed to cruelty than courteſy. Many inſtances might be adduced to prove the contrary. But when once awakened to ſuſpicion, that either his life or his intereſt is in danger, all the black paſſions of the mind, with revenge in their rear, riſe up in array.* It is an undoubted truth, that both the rude ſavage and the poliſhed citizen are equally tenacious of their pecuniary acquiſitions. And however mankind may have trifled away liberty, virtue, religion, or life, yet when the firſt rudiments of ſociety have been eſtabliſhed, the right of private property has been held ſacred. For an attempt to invade the poſſeſſions each one denominates *his own*, whether it is made by the rude hand of the ſavage, or by the refinements of ancient or modern policy, little ſhort of the blood of the aggreſſor has been thought a ſufficient atonement. Thus, the purchaſe of their commodities, the furs of the foreſt, and the alienation of their lands for trivial conſiderations; the aſſumed ſuperiority of the Europeans; their knowledge of arts and war, and

* A celebrated writer has obſerved, that "moral evil "is foreign to man, as well as phyſical evil; that both the "one and the other ſpring up out of deviations from the law "of nature."

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perhaps their ſupercilious deportment towards the aborigines might awaken in them juſt fears of extermination. Nor is it ſtrange that the natural principle of ſelf-defence operated ſtrongly in their minds, and urged them to hoſtilities that often reduced the young colonies to the utmoſt danger and diſtreſs.

But the innumerable ſwarms of the wilderneſs, who were not driven back to the vaſt interior region, were ſoon ſwept off by the ſword or by ſickneſs, which remarkably raged among them about the time of the arrival of the Engliſh.* The few who remained were quieted by treaty or by conqueſt: after which, the inhabitants of the American colonies lived many years perhaps as near the point of felicity as the condition of human nature will admit.

The religious bigotry of the firſt planters, and the temporary ferments it had occaſioned, ſubſided, and a ſpirit of candor and forbearance every where took place. They ſeemed, previous to the rupture with Britain, to have acquired that juſt and happy medium between the ferocity of

* The Plymouth ſettlers landed the twenty-ſecond of December, but ſaw not an Indian until the thirty-firſt of January. This was afterwards accounted for by the information of Samoſet, an Indian chief who viſited them, and told them the natives on the borders had been all ſwept away by a peſtilence that raged among them three or four years before.

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a ſtate of nature, and thoſe high ſtages of civilization and refinement, that at once corrupt the heart and ſap the foundation of happineſs. The ſobriety of their manners and the purity of their morals were exemplary; their piety and hoſpitality engaging; and the equal and lenient adminiſtration of their government ſecured authority, ſubordination, juſtice, regularity and peace. A well-informed yeomanry and an enlightened peaſantry evinced the early attention of the firſt ſettlers to domeſtic education. Public ſchools were eſtabliſhed in every town, particularly in the eaſtern provinces, and as early as one thouſand ſix hundred and thirty-eight, Harvard College was founded at Cambridge.*

In the ſouthern colonies, it is true, there was not that general attention to early inſtruction; the children of the opulent planters only were educated in England, while the leſs affluent were neglected, and the common claſs of whites had little education above their ſlaves. Both knowledge and property were more equally divided in the colder regions of the north; conſequently a ſpirit of more equal liberty was diffuſed. While the almoſt ſpontaneous harveſts of the warmer latitudes, the great number of ſlaves thought neceſſary to ſecure their pro-

* The elegant St. Pierre has obſerved, that there are three periods through which moſt nations paſs; the firſt below nature, in the ſecond they come up to her, and in the third, go beyond her.

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duce, and the eaſy acquiſition of fortune, nouriſhed more ariſtocratic principles. Perhaps it may be true, that wherever ſlavery is encouraged, there are among the free inhabitants very high ideas of liberty; though not ſo much from a ſenſe of the common rights of man, as from their own feelings of ſuperiority.

Democratic principles are the reſult of equality of condition. A ſuperfluity of wealth, and a train of domeſtic ſlaves, naturally baniſh a ſenſe of general liberty, and nouriſh the ſeeds of that kind of independence that uſually terminates in ariſtocracy. Yet all America, from the firſt emigrants to the preſent generation, felt an attachment to the inhabitants, a regard to the intereſt, and a reverence for the laws and government of England. Thoſe writers who have obſerved, that "theſe principles had ſcarcely any exiſtence in the colonies at the commencement of the late war," have certainly miſtaken the character of their country.

But unhappily both for Great Britain and America, the encroachments of the crown had gathered ſtrength by time; and after the ſucceſſes, the glory, and the demiſe of George the ſecond, the ſceptre deſcended to a prince, bred under the auſpices of a Scotch nobleman of the houſe of Stuart. Nurtured in all the inflated ideas of kingly prerogative, ſurrounded by flatterers and dependants, who always ſwarm in

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the purlieus of a palace, this miſguided ſovereign, dazzled with the acquiſition of empire, in the morning of youth, and in the zenith of national proſperity; more obſtinate than cruel, rather weak than remarkably wicked, conſidered an oppoſition to the mandates of his miniſters, as a crime of too daring a nature to hope for the pardon of royalty.

Lord Bute, who from the preceptor of the prince in the years of pupilage, had become the director of the monarch on the throne of Britain, found it not difficult, by that ſecret influence ever exerciſed by a favorite miniſter, to bring over a majority of the houſe of commons to co-operate with the deſigns of the crown. Thus the parliament of England became the mere creature of adminiſtration, and appeared ready to leap the boundaries of juſtice, and to undermine the pillars of their own conſtitution, by adhering ſtedfaſtly for ſeveral years to a complicated ſyſtem of tyranny, that threatened the new world with a yoke unknown to their fathers.

It had ever been deemed eſſential to the preſervation of the boaſted liberties of Engliſhmen, that no grants of monies ſhould be made, by tolls, talliage, exciſe, or any other way, without the conſent of the people by their repreſentative voice. Innovation in a point ſo intereſting might well be expected to create a general fer-

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ment through the American provinces. Numberleſs reſtrictions had been laid on the trade of the colonies previous to this period, and every method had been taken to check their enterpriſing ſpirit, and to prevent the growth of their manufactures. Nor is it ſurpriſing, that loud complaints ſhould be made when heavy exactions were laid on the ſubject, who had not, and whoſe local ſituation rendered it impracticable that he ſhould have, an equal repreſentation in parliament.

What ſtill heightened the reſentment of the Americans, in the beginning of the great conteſt, was the reflection, that they had not only always ſupported their own internal government with little expenſe to Great Britain; but while a friendly union exiſted, they had, on all occaſions, exerted their utmoſt ability to comply with every conſtitutional requiſition from the parent ſtate. We need not here revert further back than the beginning of the reign of George the third, to prove this, though earlier inſtances might be adduced.

The extraordinary exertions of the colonies, in co-operation with Britiſh meaſures, againſt the French, in the late war, were acknowledged by the Britiſh parliament to be more than adequate to their ability. After the ſucceſsful expedition to Louiſburg, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and forty-five, the ſum of two hundred

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thouſand pounds ſterling was voted by the commons, as a compenſation to ſome of the colonies for their vigorous efforts, which were carried beyond their proportional ſtrength, to aid the expedition.

Not contented with the voluntary aids they had from time to time received from the colonies, and grown giddy with the luſtre of their own power, in the plenitude of human grandeur, to which the nation had arrived in the long and ſucceſsful reign of George the ſecond, ſuch weak, impolitic and unjuſt meaſures were purſued, on the acceſſion of his grandſon, as ſoon threw the whole empire into the moſt violent convulſions.

A more particular narrative of the firſt ſettlement of America; their wars with the natives; their diſtreſſes at home; their perplexities abroad; and their diſputes with the parent ſtate, relative to grants, charters, privileges and limits, may be ſeen in the accounts of every hiſtorical writer on the ſtate of the colonies.* As this is not comprehended in the deſign of the preſent work, the reader is referred to more voluminous, or more minute deſcriptions of the events preceding the tranſactions, which brought forward a revolution, that eman-

* Theſe reſearches have been ſatisfactorily made by ſeveral literary gentlemen, whoſe talents were equal to the taſk.

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cipated the colonies from the domination of the ſceptre of Britain. This is a ſtory of ſo much intereſt to the minds of every ſon and daughter of America, endowed with the ability of reflecting, that they will not reluctantly haſten to the detail of tranſactions, that have awakened the attention and expectation of the millions among the nations beyond the Atlantic.

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CHAPTER II.

The Stamp-Act.—A Congreſs convened at New-York, One thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-five.—The Stamp-Act repealed.—New Grievances.—Suſpenſion of the Legiſlature of New York.

CHAP. II.

THE project of an American taxation might have been longer meditated, but the memorable era of the ſtamp-act, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-four, was the firſt innovation that gave a general alarm throughout the continent. By this extraordinary act, a certain duty was to be levied on all bonds, bills of lading, public papers, and writings of every kind, for the expreſs purpoſe of raiſing a revenue to the crown. As ſoon as this intelligence was tranſmitted to America, an univerſal murmur ſucceeded; and while the judicious and penetrating thought it time to make a reſolute ſtand againſt the encroachments of power, the reſentment of the lower claſſes broke out into ſuch exceſſes of riot and tumult, as prevented the operation of the favorite project.

Multitudes aſſembled in the principal towns and cities, and the popular torrent bore down all before it. The houſes of ſome, who were the avowed abettors of the meaſure, and of others, who were only ſuſpected as inimical to the liberties of America, in Boſton, in Newport,

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CHAP. II.

Connecticut, and many other places, were raſed to the ground. The commiſſioners of the ſtamp-office were every where compelled to renounce their employments, and to enter into the moſt ſolemn engagements to make no further attempts to act in this obnoxious buſineſs. At New York the act was printed, and cried about the ſtreets, under the title of "*The folly of England, and the ruin of America.*" In Philadelphia the cannon were ſpiked up, and the bells of the city, muffled, tolled from morning to evening, and every teſtimony of ſincere mourning was diſplayed, on the arrival of the ſtamp papers. Nor were any of the more ſouthern colonies leſs oppoſed to the operation of this act; and the houſe of Burgeſſes, in Virginia, was the firſt who formally reſolved againſt the encroachments of power, and the unwarrantable deſigns of the Britiſh parliament.

The novelty of their procedure, and the boldneſs of ſpirit that marked the reſolutions of that aſſembly, at once aſtoniſhed and diſconcerted the officers of the crown, and the ſupporters of the meaſures of adminiſtration. Theſe reſolves* were uſhered into the houſe, on the thirtieth of May, one thouſand, ſeven hundred and ſixty-five, by Patrick Henry, eſq. a young gentleman of the law, till then unknown in political life. He was a man, poſſeſſed of ſtrong powers, much profeſſional knowledge,

* Appendix, Note, No. II.

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and of ſuch abilities as qualified him for the exigencies of the day. Fearleſs of the cry of '*treaſon*,' echoed againſt him from ſeveral quarters, he juſtified the meaſure, and ſupported the reſolves, in a ſpeech, that did honor both to his underſtanding, and his patriotiſm. The governor, to check the progreſs of ſuch daring principles, immediately diſſolved the aſſembly. CHAP II.

1764. But the diſpoſition of the people was diſcovered, when, on a new election, thoſe gentlemen were every where re-choſen, who had ſhewn the moſt firmneſs and zeal, in oppoſition to the ſtamp-act. Indeed, from New Hampſhire to the Carolinas, a general averſion appeared againſt this experiment of adminiſtration. Nor was the flame confined to the continent; it had ſpread to the inſular regions, whoſe inhabitants, conſtitutionally more ſanguine than thoſe born in colder climates, diſcovered ſtronger marks of reſentment, and prouder tokens of diſobedience to miniſterial authority. Thus ſeveral of the Weſt India iſlands ſhewed equal violence, in the deſtruction of the ſtamp papers, diſguſt at the act, and indignation towards the officers who were bold enough to attempt its execution. Nor did they at this period appear leſs determined to reſiſt the operation of all unconſtitutional mandates, than the generous planters of the ſouthern, or the independent ſpirits of the northern colonies.

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CHAP. II.

1764.

When the general aſſembly of the Maſſachuſetts met this year, it appeared that moſt of the members of the houſe of repreſentatives had inſtructions from their conſtituents to make every legal and ſpirited oppoſition to the diſtribution of the ſtamped papers, to the execution of the act in any form, and to every other parliamentary infringement on the rights of the people of the colonies. A ſpecimen of the ſpirit of the times may be ſeen in a ſingle inſtance of thoſe inſtructions, which were given to the repreſentative of the town of Plymouth, the capital of the old colony.* Similar meaſures were adopted in moſt of the other provinces. In conſequence of which, petitions from the reſpective aſſemblies, replete with the ſtrongeſt expreſſions of loyalty and affection to the king, and a regard to the Britiſh nation, were preſented to his majeſty, through the hands of the colonial agents.

The ferment was however too general, and the ſpirits of the people too much agitated, to wait patiently the reſult of their own applications. So univerſal was the reſentment and diſcontent of the people, that the more judicious and diſcreet characters were exceedingly apprehenſive that the general clamor might terminate in the extremes of anarchy. Heavy duties had been laid on all goods imported from ſuch of the Weſt India iſlands as did not belong to Great Britain.

* See Appendix, Note, No. III.

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These duties were to be paid into the exchequer, and all penalties incurred, were to be recovered in the courts of vice-admiralty, by the determination of a single judge, without trial by jury, and the judge's salary was to be paid out of the fruits of the forfeiture.

All remonstrances against this innovating system had hitherto been without effect; and in this period of suspense, apprehension and anxiety, a general congress of delegates from the several provinces was proposed by the honorable James Otis, of Barnstable, in the Massachusetts. He was a gentleman of great probity, experience, and parliamentary abilities, whose religious adherence to the rights of his country had distinguished him through a long course of years, in which he had sustained some of the first offices in government. This proposal, from a man of his acknowledged judgment, discretion and firmness, was universally pleasing. The measure was communicated to some of the principal members of the two houses of assembly, and immediately adopted, not only by the Massachusetts, but very soon after by most of the other colonies. Thus originated the first congress ever convened in America by the united voice of the people, in order to justify their claims to the rights of Englishmen, and the privileges of the British constitution.

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CHAP. II.

1764. It has been obſerved that Virginia and the Maſſachuſetts made the firſt oppoſition to parliamentary meaſures, on different grounds. The Virginians, in their reſolves, came forward, conſcious of their own independence, and at once aſſerted their rights as men. The Maſſachuſetts generally founded their claims on the rights of Britiſh ſubjects, and the privileges of their Engliſh anceſtors; but the era was not far diſtant, when the united colonies took the ſame ground, the claim of native independence, regardleſs of charters or foreign reſtrictions.

At a period when the taſte and opinions of Americans were comparatively pure and ſimple, while they poſſeſſed that independence and dignity of mind, which is loſt only by a multiplicity of wants and intereſts, new ſcenes were opening, beyond the reach of human calculation. At this important criſis, the delegates appointed from ſeveral of the colonies, to deliberate on the lowering aſpect of political affairs, met at New York, on the firſt Tueſday of October, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-five.*

1765. The moderate demands of this body, and the ſhort period of its exiſtence, diſcovered at once the affectionate attachment of its members†

* Several of the colonies were prevented ſending delegates to the congreſs at New York, by the royal governors, who would not permit the aſſemblies to meet.

† See Appendix, Note, No. IV.

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CHAP. II.

to the parent ſtate and their dread of a general rupture, which at that time univerſally prevailed. They ſtated their claims as ſubjects to the crown of Great Britain; appointed agents to enforce them in the national councils; and agreed on petitions for the repeal of the ſtamp-act, which had ſown the ſeeds of diſcord throughout the colonies. The prayer of their conſtituents was, in a ſpirited, yet reſpectful manner, offered through them to the king, lords, and commons of Great Britain: they then ſeparated, to wait the event.*

1765.

A majority of the principal merchants of the city of London, the opulent Weſt India proprietors who reſided in England, and moſt of the manufacturing towns through the kingdom, accompanied with ſimilar petitions, thoſe offered by the congreſs convened at New York. In conſequence of the general averſion to the ſtamp-act, the Britiſh miniſtry were changed in appearance, though the ſame men who had fabricated the American ſyſtem, ſtill retained their influence on the mind of the king, and in the councils of the nation. The parliamentary debates of the winter of one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-ſix, evinced the important conſequences expected from the deciſion of the queſtion, relative to an American taxation.

1766.

* See their petition in the records of the congreſs at New York, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-five.

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1766.

Warm and ſpirited arguments in favor of the meaſure, energetic reaſonings againſt it, with many ſarcaſtic ſtrokes on adminiſtration, from ſome of the prime orators in parliament, intereſted the hearers of every rank and deſcription. Finally, in order to quiet the public mind, the execution of the *ſtamp-act* was pronounced *inexpedient* by a majority of the houſe of commons, and a bill paſſed for its repeal on March the eighteenth, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-ſix. But a clauſe was inſerted therein, holding up a parliamentary right to make laws binding on the colonies in all caſes whatſoever: and a kind of condition was tacked to the repeal, that compenſation ſhould be made to all who had ſuffered, either in perſon or property, by the late riotous proceedings.

A ſhort-lived joy was diffuſed throughout America, even by this deluſive appearance of lenity: the people of every deſcription manifeſted the ſtrongeſt deſire, that harmony might be re-eſtabliſhed between Great Britain and the colonies. Bonfires, illuminations, and all the uſual expreſſions of popular ſatisfaction, were diſplayed on the joyful occaſion: yet, amidſt the demonſtrations of this lively gratitude, there were ſome who had ſagacity enough to ſee, that the Britiſh miniſtry was not ſo much inſtigated by principles of equity, as impelled by neceſſity. Theſe deemed any relaxation in parliament an act of juſtice, rather than favor; and

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felt more reſentment for the manner, than obligation for the deſign, of this partial repeal. Their opinion was fully juſtified by the ſubſequent conduct of adminiſtration.

CHAP. II. 1766.

When the aſſembly of Maſſachuſetts met the ſucceeding winter, there ſeemed to prevail a general diſpoſition for peace: the ſenſe of injury was checked; and ſuch a ſpirit of affection and loyalty appeared, that the two houſes agreed to a bill for compenſation to all ſufferers, in the late times of confuſion and riot. But they were careful not to recognize a *right* in parliament to make ſuch a requiſition: they ordered it to be entered on the journals of the houſe, that "for "the ſake of internal peace, they waved all de- "bate and controverſy, though perſuaded, the "delinquent ſufferers had no juſt claim on the "province: that, influenced by a loyal regard "to his majeſty's recommendation, (not conſid- "ering it as a requiſition;) and that, from a "deference to the opinions of ſome illuſtrious "patrons of America, in the houſe of commons, "who had urged them to a compliance; They "therefore acceded to the propoſal; though, at "the ſame time, they conſidered it a very rep- "rehenſible ſtep in thoſe who had ſuffered, to "apply for relief to the parliament of Britain, "inſtead of ſubmitting to the juſtice and clem- "ency of their own legiſlature."

1767.

They made ſeveral other juſt and ſevere obſervations on the high-toned ſpeech of the gov-

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CHAP. II. 1767.

ernor, who had ſaid, "that the requiſition of "the miniſtry was founded on ſo much juſtice "and humanity, that it could not be contro- "verted." They inquired, if the authority with which he introduced the miniſterial demand, precluded all diſputation about complying with it, what freedom of choice they had left in the caſe? They ſaid, "With regard to the reſt of "your excellency's ſpeech, we are conſtrained "to obſerve, that the general air and ſtyle of it "favors much more of an act of free grace and "pardon, than of a parliamentary addreſs to the "two houſes of aſſembly: and we moſt ſincerely "wiſh your excellency had been pleaſed to re- "ſerve it, if needful, for a proclamation."

In the bill for compenſation by the aſſembly of Maſſachuſetts, was added a very offenſive clauſe. A general pardon and oblivion was granted to all offenders in the late confuſion, tumults and riots. An exact detail of theſe proceedings was tranſmitted to England. The king and council diſallowed the act, as compriſing in it a bill of indemnity to the Boſton rioters; and ordered compenſation made to the late ſufferers, without any ſupplementary conditions. No notice was taken of this order, nor any alteration made in the act. The money was drawn from the treaſury of the province to ſatisfy the claimants for compenſation; and no farther inquiries were made relative to the authors of the late tumultuary proceedings of the times, when

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the minds of men had been wrought up to a ferment, beyond the reach of all legal reſtraint. CHAP. II. 1767.

The year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-ſix had paſſed over without any other remarkable political events. All colonial meaſures agitated in England, were regularly tranſmitted by the miniſter for the American department to the ſeveral plantation governors; who, on every communication, endeavoured to enforce the operation of parliamentary authority, by the moſt ſanguine injunctions of their own, and a magnificent diſplay of royal reſentment, on the ſmalleſt token of diſobedience to miniſterial requiſitions. But it will appear, that through a long ſeries of reſolves and meſſages, letters and petitions, which paſſed between the parties, previous to the commencement of hoſtilities, the watchful guardians of American freedom never loſt ſight of the intrigues of their enemies, or the miſchievous deſigns of ſuch as were under the influence of the crown, on either ſide the Atlantic.

It may be obſerved, that the tranquillity of the provinces had for ſome time been interrupted by the innovating ſpirit of the Britiſh miniſtry, inſtigated by a few proſtitutes of power, nurtured in the lap of America, and bound by every tie of honor and gratitude, to be faithful to the intereſts of their country. The ſocial enjoyments of life had long been diſturbed, the mind

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CHAP. II. 1767.

fretted, and the people rendered ſuſpicious, when they ſaw ſome of their fellow-citizens, who did not heſitate at a junction with the accumulated ſwarms of hirelings, ſent from Great Britain to raviſh from the colonies the rights they claimed both by nature and by compact. That the hard-hearted judges of admiralty, and the crowd of revenue officers that hovered about the cuſtom houſes, ſhould ſeldom be actuated by the principles of juſtice, is not ſtrange. Peculation was generally the prime object of this claſs; and the oaths they adminiſtered, and the habits they encouraged, were favorable to every ſpecies of bribery and corruption. The rapacity which inſtigated theſe deſcriptions of men had little check, while they ſaw themſelves upheld even by ſome governors of provinces. In this grade, which ought ever to be the protectors of the rights of the people, there were ſome who were total ſtrangers to all ideas of equity, freedom, or urbanity. It was obſerved at this time, in a ſpeech before the houſe of commons, by colonel Barre, that "to his certain knowledge, ſome were promoted to the "higheſt ſeats of honor in America, who were "glad to fly to a foreign country, to eſcape being brought to the bar of juſtice in their "own."*

However injudicious the appointments to American departments might be, the darling

* Parliamentary debates for 1766.

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point of an American revenue was an object too conſequential to be relinquiſhed, either by the court at St. James's, the plantation governors, or their mercenary adherents diſperſed through the continent. Beſides theſe, there were ſeveral claſſes in America, who were at firſt exceedingly oppoſed to meaſures that militated with the deſigns of adminiſtration. Some, impreſſed by long connexion, were intimidated by her power, and attached by affection to Britain: others, the true diſciples of paſſive obedience, had real ſcruples of conſcience with regard to any reſiſtance to the powers that be: theſe, whether actuated by affection or fear, by principle or intereſt, formed a cloſe combination with the colonial governors, cuſtom houſe officers, and all in ſubordinate departments, who hung on the court for ſubſiſtence. By the tenor of the writings of ſome of theſe, and the inſolent behaviour of others, they became equally obnoxious in the eyes of the people, with the officers of the crown and the danglers for place; who, diſappointed of their prey by the repeal of the ſtamp-act, and reſtleſs for ſome new project that might enable them to riſe into importance on the ſpoils of America, were continually whiſpering malicious inſinuations into the ears of the financiers and miniſters of colonial departments.

They repreſented the mercantile body in America as a ſet of ſmugglers, forever breaking over the laws of trade and of ſociety; the

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people in general as factious, turbulent, and aiming at independence; the legiſlatures in the ſeveral provinces as marked with the ſame ſpirit; and government every where in ſo lax a ſtate, that the civil authority was inſufficient to prevent the fatal effects of popular diſcontent.

It is indeed true, that reſentment had in ſeveral inſtances ariſen to outrage; and that the moſt unwarrantable exceſſes had been committed on ſome occaſions, which gave grounds for unfavorable repreſentations. Yet it muſt be acknowledged, that the voice of the people ſeldom breathes univerſal murmur, but when the inſolence or the oppreſſion of their rulers extorts the bitter complaint. On the contrary, there is a certain ſupineneſs which generally overſpreads the multitude, and diſpoſes mankind to ſubmit quietly to any form of government, rather than to be at the expenſe and hazard of reſiſtance. They become attached to ancient modes by habits of obedience, though the reins of authority are ſometimes held by the moſt rigorous hand. Thus we have ſeen in all ages, the many become the ſlaves of the few: preferring the wretched tranquillity of inglorious eaſe, they patiently yield to deſpotic maſters, until awakened by multiplied wrongs to the feelings of human nature; which, when once arouſed to a conſciouſneſs of the native freedom and equal rights of man, ever revolts at the idea of ſervitude.

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1767.

Perhaps the ſtory of political revolution never exhibited a more general enthuſiaſm in the cauſe of liberty, than that which for ſeveral years pervaded all ranks in America, and brought forward events little expected by the moſt ſanguine ſpirits in the beginning of the controverſy. A conteſt now puſhed with ſo much vigour, that the intelligent yeomanry of the country, as well as thoſe educated in the higher walks, became convinced that nothing leſs than a ſyſtematical plan of ſlavery was deſigned againſt them. They viewed the chains as already forged to manacle the unborn millions; and though every one ſeemed to dread any new interruption of public tranquillity, the impetuoſity of ſome led them into exceſſes which could not be reſtrained by thoſe of more cool and diſcreet deportment. To the moſt moderate and judicious it ſoon became apparent, that unleſs a timely and bold reſiſtance prevented, the coloniſts muſt in a few years ſink into the ſame wretched thraldom, that marks the miſerable Aſiatic.

Few of the executive officers employed by the king of Great Britain, and fewer of their adherents, were qualified either by education, principle, or inclination, to allay the ferment of the times, or to eradicate the ſuſpicions of men, who, from an hereditary love of freedom, were tenderly touched by the ſmalleſt attempt, to undermine the invaluable poſſeſſion. Yet, per-

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haps few of the colonies, at this period, ſuffered equal embarraſſments with the Maſſachuſetts. The inhabitants of that province were conſidered as the prime leaders of faction, the diſturbers of public tranquillity, and Boſton the ſeat of ſedition. Vengeance was continually denounced againſt that capital, and indeed the whole province, through the letters, meſſages, and ſpeeches of their firſt magiſtrate.

Unhappily for both parties, governor Bernard was very illy calculated to promote the intereſt of the people, or ſupport the honor of his maſter. He was a man of little genius, but ſome learning. He was by education ſtrongly impreſſed with high ideas of canon and feudal law, and fond of a ſyſtem of government that had been long obſolete in England, and had never had an exiſtence in America. His diſpoſition was choleric and ſanguine, obſtinate and deſigning, yet too open and frank to diſguiſe his intrigues, and too precipitant to bring them to maturity. A reviſion of colony charters, a reſumption of former privileges, and an American revenue, were the conſtant topics of his letters to adminiſtration.* To prove the neceſſity of theſe meaſures, the moſt trivial diſturbance was magnified to a riot; and to give a pretext to theſe wicked inſinuations, it was

* See his pamphlet on law and polity, and his letters to the Britiſh miniſtry, while he preſided in the Maſſachuſetts.

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thought by many, that tumults were frequently excited by the indiſcretion or malignancy of his own partizans.

The declaratory bill ſtill hung ſuſpended over the heads of the Americans, nor was it ſuffered to remain long without trying its operative effects. The clauſe holding up a right to tax America at pleaſure, and "to bind them "in all caſes whatſoever," was comprehenſive and alarming. Yet it was not generally expected, that the miniſtry would ſoon endeavour to avail themſelves of the dangerous experiment; but, in this, the public were miſtaken.

It has already been obſerved, that the arbitrary diſpoſition of George the third; the abſurd ſyſtem of policy adopted in conformity to his principles, and a parliamentary majority at the command of the miniſtry, rendered it not difficult to enforce any meaſures that might tend to an acceſſion to the powers of the crown. It was a juſt ſentiment of an elegant writer, that "almoſt all the vices of royalty have "been principally occaſioned by a ſlaviſh adula- "tion in the language of their ſubjects; and "to the ſhame of the Engliſh it muſt be ſaid, "that none of the enſlaved nations in the world "have addreſſed the throne in a more fulſome "and hyperbolical ſtyle."*

* Mrs. Macauley's letter to earl Stanhope.

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1767.

The dignity of the crown, the ſupremacy of parliament, and the diſloyalty of the colonies, were the theme of the court, the echo of its creatures, and of the Britiſh nation in general; nor was it thought good policy to let the high claims of government lie long in a dormant ſtate. Accordingly not many months after the repeal of the ſtamp-act, the chancellor of the exchequer, Charles Townſhend, Eſq. came forward and pawned his character on the ſucceſs of a new attempt to tax the American colonies. He was a gentleman of conſpicuous abilities, and much profeſſional knowledge; endowed with more boldneſs than diſcretion; he had "the talent of bringing together at once all "that was neceſſary to eſtabliſh, to illuſtrate, "and to decorate the ſide of the queſtion he "was on."*

He introduced ſeveral bills in ſupport of his ſanguinary deſigns, which without much difficulty obtained the ſanction of parliament, and the royal aſſent. The purport of the new project for revenue was to levy certain duties on paper, glaſs, painters' colors, and ſeveral other articles uſually imported into America. It was alſo directed that the duties on India teas, which

* A writer has more recently obſerved that Charles Townſhend was a man of riſing parliamentary reputation and brilliant talents; but capricious, inſincere, intriguing, and wholly deſtitute of diſcretion or ſolidity.

Belſham on the reign of George the third.

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had been a productive ſource of revenue in England, ſhould be taken off there, and three pence per pound levied on all kinds that ſhould in future be purchaſed in the colonies.

This inconſiderable duty on teas finally became an object of high importance and altercation; it was not the ſum, but the principle that was conteſted; it manifeſtly appeared that this was only a financiering expedient to raiſe a revenue from the colonies by imperceptible taxes. The defenders of the privileges and the freedom of the colonies, denied all parliamentary right to tax them in any way whatever. They aſſerted that if the collection of this duty was permitted, it would eſtabliſh a precedent, and ſtrengthen the claim parliament had aſſumed, to tax them at pleaſure. To do it by the ſecret modes of impoſts and exciſes would ruin their trade, corrupt the morals of the people, and was more abhorrent in their eyes than a direct demand. The moſt judicious and intelligent Americans at this time conſidered all *imperceptible* taxes fraught with evils, that tended to enſlave any country plunged in the boundleſs chaos of fiſcal demands that this practice introduces.

In conſequence of the new ſyſtem, a board of cuſtoms was inſtituted and commiſſioners appointed to ſet in Boſton to collect the duties; which were beſides other purpoſes to ſupply a

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fund for the payment of the large ſalaries annexed to their office. A civil liſt was ſoon after eſtabliſhed, and the governors of the Maſſachuſetts, judges of the ſuperior court, and ſuch other officers as had heretofore depended on the free grants of the repreſentative body, were to be paid out of the revenue cheſt.

Thus rendered wholly independent of the general aſſembly, there was no check left on the wanton exerciſe of power in the crown officers, however diſpoſed they might be to abuſe their truſt. The diſtance from the throne, it was ſaid, muſt delay, if not wholly prevent, all relief under any oppreſſions the people might ſuffer from the ſervants of government; and to crown the long liſt of grievances, ſpecified by the patriots of the day, the extenſion of the courts of vice-admiralty was none of the leaſt. They were veſted with certain powers that diſpenſed with the mode of trial by jury, annihilated the privileges of Engliſhmen, and placed the liberty of every man in the hand of a petty officer of the cuſtoms. By warrant of a writ of aſſiſtance from the governor or lieutenant governor, any officer of the revenue was authorized to enter the dwelling of the moſt reſpectable inhabitant on the ſmalleſt ſuſpicion of a concealment of contraband goods, and to inſult, ſearch, or ſeize, with impunity.

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An attorney* at law, of ſome profeſſional abilities and ingenuity, but without either property or principle, was, by the inſtigation of Mr. Bernard, appointed ſole judge of admiralty in the Maſſachuſetts. The dangerous aſpect of this court, particularly when aided by writs of aſſiſtance, was oppoſed with peculiar energy and ſtrength of argument, by James Otis, Eſq. of Boſton, who, by the exertion of his talents and the ſacrifice of intereſt, may juſtly claim the honor of laying the foundation of a revolution, which has been productive of the happieſt effects to the civil and political intereſts of mankind.

He was the firſt champion of American freedom, who had the courage to put his ſignature to the conteſt between Great Britain and the colonies. He had in a clear, conciſe, and nervous manner, ſtated and vindicated the rights of the American colonies, and publiſhed his obſervations in Boſton, while the ſtamp-act hung ſuſpended. This tract was written with ſuch a ſpirit of liberality, loyalty, and impartiality, that though at the time ſome were ready to pronounce it *treaſonable*, yet, when oppoſition run higher, many of the moſt judicious partizans of the crown were willing to admit it as a

* Jonathan Sewall, a native of the province, whoſe pen had been employed to vindicate the meaſures of adminiſtration and the conduct of governor Bernard, under the ſignature of Philalethes, Maſſachuſettenſis, &c. &c.

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juſt criterion of political truth.* But the author was abuſed and vilified by the ſcribblers of the court, and threatened with an arreſt from the crown, for the boldneſs of his opinions. Yet he continued to advocate the rights of the people, and in the courſe of his argument againſt the iniquitous conſequences of writs of aſſiſtance, he obſerved, that "his "engaging in this cauſe had raiſed the reſent- "ment of its abettors; but that he argued it "from principle, and with peculiar pleaſure, as "it was in favor of *Britiſh liberty*, and in op- "poſition to the exerciſe of a power, that in "former periods of Engliſh hiſtory, had coſt "one king of England his head, and another "his crown."—He added, "I can ſincerely de- "clare, that I ſubmit myſelf to every opprobri- "ous name for conſcience ſake, and deſpiſe all "thoſe, whom guilt, folly or malice have made "my foes."

It was on this occaſion, that Mr. Otis reſigned the office of judge advocate, and renounced all employment under ſo corrupt an adminiſtration, boldly declaring in the face of the ſupreme court, at this dangerous criſis, that "the only "principle of public conduct, worthy a gentle- "man or a man, was the ſacrifice of health, eaſe, "applauſe, eſtate, or even life, to the ſacred

* See Mr. Otis's pamphlet, entitled, "The rights of "the colonies ſtated and vindicated."

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"calls of his country; that theſe manly ſenti-"ments in private life made the good citizen, "in public, the patriot and the hero."—Thus was verified in his conduct the obſervation of a writer * of merit and celebrity, that "it was "as difficult for Great Britain to frighten as to "cheat Americans into ſervitude; that ſhe "ought to leave them in the peacable poſſeſſion "of that liberty which they received at their "birth, and were reſolved to retain to their "death."

When the new parliamentary regulations reached America, all the colonies in their ſeveral departments petitioned in the moſt ſtrenuous manner againſt any American taxation, and all other recent innovations relative to the government of the Britiſh provinces. Theſe petitions were, when received by the miniſtry, treated by them with the utmoſt contempt. But they were ſupported by a reſpectable party in the parliament of Britain, who did not neglect to warn the adminiſtration of the danger of precipitating meaſures, that might require before the termination of a conteſt thus hurried

* Mr. Dickenſon, author of the much admired *Farmer's Letters*, the firſt copy of which he incloſed to his friend, Mr. Otis, and obſerved to him, that "the examples of "public ſpirit in the cold regions of the north, had rouſed "the languid latitudes of the ſouth, to a proper vindica-"tion of their rights." See Appendix, Note, No. V.

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on, "more virtue and abilities than the miniſtry "poſſeſſed."

By ſome ſteps taken by adminiſtration previous to the preſent period, there was reaſon to ſuppoſe that they were themſelves apprehenſive, that their ſyſtem for governing the colonies in a more arbitrary manner would give great offence, and create diſturbances of ſo alarming a nature, that perhaps the aid of military power might become neceſſary to enforce the completion of their deſigns. Doubtleſs it was with a view of facilitating the new projects, that an extraordinary bill had been paſſed in parliament, making it lawful for the officers of the Britiſh army to quarter their troops in private houſes throughout the colonies. Thus while mixed in every family, it might become more eaſy to awe the people into ſubmiſſion, and compel them by military terrors to the baſeſt compliances. But the colony agents reſiding in London, and the merchants concerned in the American trade, remonſtrated ſo warmly againſt the injuſtice and cruelty of ſuch a procedure, that a part of the bill was dropped. Yet it was too important a point wholly to relinquiſh; of conſequence a clauſe was left, obliging the ſeveral legiſlative aſſemblies to provide quarters for the king's marching regiments, and to furniſh a number of ſpecified articles at the expenſe of the province, wherever they might be ſtationed.

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This act continued in full force after the ſtamp-act was repealed, though it equally militated with that part of the Britiſh conſtitution which provides that no monies ſhould be raiſed on the ſubject without his conſent. Yet rather than enter on a new diſpute, the coloniſts in general choſe to evade it for the preſent, and without many obſervations thereon had occaſionally made ſome voluntary proviſions for the ſupport of the king's troops. It was hoped the act might be only a temporary expedient to hold up the authority of parliament, and that in a ſhort time the claim might die of itſelf without any attempt to revive ſuch an unreaſonable demand. But New York, more explicit in her refuſal to *obey*, was ſuſpended from all powers of legiſlation until the quartering act ſhould be complied with in the fulleſt extent. By this unprecedented treatment of one of the colonies, and the innumerable exactions and reſtrictions on all, a general apprehenſion prevailed, that nothing but a firm, vigorous and united reſiſtance could ſhield from the attacks that threatened the total extinction of civil liberty through the continent.

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CHAPTER III.

Curſory Obſervations.—Maſſachuſetts Circular Letter.—A new Houſe of Repreſentatives called.—Governor Bernard impeached.—A Riot on the Seizure of a Veſſel.—Troops applied for to protect the King's Officers.—A Convention at Boſton.—Troops arrive.—A Combination againſt all Commerce with Great Britain.—A General Aſſembly convened at Boſton—removed to Cambridge.—Governor Bernard after his Impeachment repairs to England.

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THE Britiſh colonies at this period through the American continent contained, excluſive of Canada and Nova Scotia, the provinces of New Hampſhire, and Maſſachuſetts Bay, of Rhode Iſland, Connecticut, New York, New Jerſey, Pennſylvania, the Delaware counties, Virginia, Maryland, the two Carolinas, and Georgia, beſides the Floridas, and an unbounded tract of wilderneſs not yet explored. Theſe ſeveral provinces had been always governed by their own diſtinct legiſlatures. It is true there was ſome variety in their religious opinions, but a ſtriking ſimilarity in their political inſtitutions, except in the proprietary governments. At the ſame time the colonies, afterwards the thirteen ſtates, were equally marked with that manly ſpirit of freedom, characteriſtic of Americans from New Hampſhire to Georgia.

Arouſed by the ſame injuries from the parent ſtate, threatened in the ſame manner by the

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common enemies to the rights of ſociety among themſelves, their petitions to the throne had been ſuppreſſed without even a reading, their remonſtrances were ridiculed and their ſupplications rejected. They determined no longer to ſubmit. All ſtood ready to unite in the ſame meaſures to obtain that redreſs of grievances they had ſo long requeſted, and that relief from burdens they had ſo long complained of, to ſo little purpoſe. Yet there was no bond of connexion by which a ſimilarity of ſentiment and concord in action might appear, whether they were again diſpoſed to revert to the hitherto fruitleſs mode of petition and remonſtrance, or to leave that humiliating path for a line of conduct more cogent and influential in the conteſts of nations.

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A circular letter dated February the eleventh, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-eight, by the legiſlature of Maſſachuſetts, directed to the repreſentatives and burgeſſes of the people through the continent, was a meaſure well calculated for this ſalutary purpoſe.* This letter painted in the ſtrongeſt colors the difficulties they apprehended, the embarraſſments they felt, and the ſteps already taken to obtain relief. It contained the full opinion of that aſſembly relative to the late acts of parliament; while at the ſame time they expatiated

* See Appendix, Note, No. VI.

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on their duty and attachment to the king, and detailed in terms of reſpect the repreſentations that had been made to his miniſters, they expreſſed the boldeſt determination to continue a free but a loyal people. Indeed there were few, if any, who indulged an idea of a final ſeparation from Britain at ſo early a period; or that even wiſhed for more than an equal participation of the privileges of the Britiſh conſtitution.

INDEPENDENCE was a plant of a later growth. Though the ſoil might be congenial, and the boundaries of nature pointed out the event, yet every one choſe to view it at a diſtance, rather than wiſhed to witneſs the convulſions that ſuch a diſmemberment of the empire muſt neceſſarily occaſion.

After the circulation of this alarming letter,* wherever any of the governors had permitted the legiſlative bodies to meet, an anſwer was returned by the aſſemblies replete with encomiums on the exertion and the zeal of the Maſſachuſetts. They obſerved that the ſpirit that dictated that letter was but a tranſcript of their own feelings; and that though equally impreſſed with every ſentiment of reſpect to the prince on the throne of Britain, and feeling the ſtrongeſt attachment to the houſe of Hanover, they could not but

* See Appendix, Note, No. VII.

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reject with diſdain the late meaſures, ſo repugnant to the dignity of the crown and the true intereſt of the realm; and that at every hazard they were determined to reſiſt all acts of parliament for the injurious purpoſe of raiſing a revenue in America. They alſo added, that they had reſpectively offered the moſt humble ſupplications to the king; that they had remonſtrated to both houſes of parliament, and had directed their agents at the Britiſh court to leave no effort untried to obtain relief, without being compelled to what might be deemed by royalty an illegal mode of oppoſition.

In conſequence of the ſpirited proceedings of the houſe of repreſentatives, the general aſſembly of Maſſachuſetts was diſſolved, nor were they ſuffered to meet again until a new election. Theſe tranſactions were carefully tranſmitted to adminiſtration by ſeveral of the plantation governors, and particularly Mr. Bernard, with inflammatory obſervations of his own, interlarded with the moſt illiberal abuſe of the principal leaders of the late meaſures in the aſſembly of Maſſachuſetts.

Their charter, which ſtill provided for the election of the legiſlature, obliged the governor to ſummon a new aſſembly to meet May the twenty-fourth, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-eight. The firſt communication laid before the houſe by the governor contain-

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ed a haughty requiſition from the Britiſh miniſter of ſtate, directing in his majeſty's name that the preſent houſe ſhould immediately *reſcind* the reſolutions of a former one, which had produced the celebrated circular letter. Governor Bernard alſo intimated, that it was his majeſty's pleaſure, that on a non-compliance with this extraordinary mandate, the preſent aſſembly ſhould be diſſolved without delay.

What heightened the reſentment to the manner of this ſingular order, ſigned by lord Hillſborough, ſecretary of ſtate for the American department, was, that he therein intimated to the governor that he need not fear the moſt *unqualified obedience* on his part to the high meaſures of adminiſtration, aſſuring him that it would not operate to his diſadvantage, as care would be taken in future to provide for his intereſt, and to ſupport the dignity of government, without the interpoſitions or exiſtence of a provincial legiſlature.

Theſe meſſages were received by the repreſentative body with a ſteadineſs and reſolution becoming the defenders of the rights of a free people. After appointing a committee to conſider and prepare an anſwer to them, they proceeded with great coolneſs to the uſual buſineſs of the ſeſſion, without further notice of what had paſſed.

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Within a day or two, they received a ſecond meſſage from the governor, purporting that he expected an immediate and an explicit anſwer to the authoritative requiſition; and that if they longer poſtponed their reſolutions, he ſhould conſider their delay as an "*oppugnation* "*to his majeſty's authority*, and a negative to "the command, by an expiring faction." On this, the houſe deſired time to conſult their conſtituents on ſuch an extraordinary queſtion. This being peremptorily and petulantly refuſed, the houſe ordered the board of council to be informed, that they were entering on a debate of importance, that they ſhould give them notice when it was over, and directed the door-keeper to call no member out, on any pretence whatever.

The committee appointed to anſwer the governor's ſeveral meſſages, were gentlemen of known attachment to the cauſe of their country, who on every occaſion had rejected all ſervile compliances with miniſterial requiſitions. They were not long on the buſineſs. When they returned to the houſe, the galleries were immediately cleared, and they reported an anſwer, bold and determined, yet decent and loyal. In the courſe of their reply, they obſerved that it was not an "*expiring faction*," that the governor had charged with "*oppugnation to his majeſty's* "*authority*," that it was the beſt blood of the colony who oppoſed the miniſterial meaſures,

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men of reputation, fortune and rank, equal to any who enjoyed the ſmiles of government; that their exertions were from a conſcious ſenſe of duty to their God, to their king, to their country, and to poſterity.*

This committee at the ſame time reported a very ſpirited letter to lord Hillſborough, which they had prepared to lay before the houſe. In this they remonſtrated on the injuſtice as well as abſurdity of a requiſition, when a compliance was impracticable, even had they the inclination to reſcind the doings of a former houſe. This letter was approved by the houſe, and on a diviſion on the queſtion of reſcinding the vote of a former aſſembly, it was negatived by a majority of ninety-two to ſeventeen.

The ſame committee was immediately nominated to prepare a petition to the king to remove Mr. Bernard from the government of Maſſachuſetts. They drew up a petition for this purpoſe without leaving the houſe, and immediately reported it. They alleged a long liſt of accuſations againſt the governor, and requeſted his majeſty that one more worthy to repreſent ſo *great* and *good* a *king*, might be ſent to preſide in the province. Thus impeached by the houſe, the ſame

* The principal members of this committee, were Major Joſeph Hawley, of Northampton, James Otis, Eſq. of Boſton, Samuel Adams, James Warren, of Plymouth, John Hancock, and Thomas Cuſhing, Eſqrs.

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minority that had appeared ready to reſcind the circular letter, declared themſelves againſt the impeachment of governor Bernard.* Their ſervility was marked with peculiar odium: they were ſtigmatized by the appellation of the *infamous ſeventeen*, until their names were loſt in a ſucceſſion of great events and more important characters.

When the doors of the houſe were opened, the ſecretary who had been long in waiting for admiſſion, informed the houſe that the governor was in the chair, and deſired their attendance in the council chamber. They complied without heſitation, but were received in a moſt ungracious manner. With much ill humor the governor reprimanded them in the language of an angry pedagogue, inſtead of the manner becoming the firſt magiſtrate when addreſſing the repreſentatives of a free people: he concluded his harangue by proroguing the aſſembly, which within a few days he diſſolved by proclamation.

In the mean time by warm and virulent letters from this indiſcreet governor; by others full of invective from the commiſſioners of the cuſtoms, and by the *ſecret influence* of ſome, who yet concealed themſelves within the vizard of moderation, "who held the language of patriot-"iſm, but trod in the footſteps of tyranny,"

* Journals of the houſe.

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leave was obtained from adminiſtration to apply to the commander in chief of the king's troops, then at New York, to ſend ſeveral regiments to Boſton, as a neceſſary aid to civil government, which they repreſented as too weak to ſuppreſs the diſorders of the times. It was urged that this ſtep was abſolutely neceſſary, to enable the officers of the crown to carry into execution the laws of the ſupreme legiſlature.

A new pretext had been recently given to the malignant party, to urge with a ſhew of plauſibility, the immediate neceſſity of the military arm, to quell the riotous proceedings of the town of Boſton, to ſtrengthen the hands of government, and reſtore order and tranquillity to the province. The ſeizure of a veſſel belonging to a popular gentleman,* under ſuſpicion of a breach of the acts of trade, raiſed a ſudden reſentment among the citizens of Boſton. The conduct of the owner was indeed reprehenſible, in permitting a part of the cargo to be unladen in a clandeſtine manner; but the mode of the ſeizure appeared like a deſign to raiſe a ſudden ferment, that might be improved to corroborate the arguments for the neceſſity of ſtanding troops to be ſtationed within the town.

On a certain ſignal, a number of boats, manned and armed, rowed up to the wharf, cut the

* John Hancock, Eſq. afterwards governor of the Maſſachuſetts.

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fasts of the suspected vessel, carried her off, and placed her under the stern of a ship of war, as if apprehensive of a rescue. This was executed in the edge of the evening, when apprentices and the younger classes were usually in the streets. It had what was thought to be the desired effect; the inconsiderate rabble, unapprehensive of the snare, and thoughtless of consequences, pelted some of the custom-house officers with brick-bats, broke their windows, drew one of their boats before the door of the gentleman they thought injured, and set it on fire; after which they dispersed without further mischief.

This trivial disturbance was exaggerated until it wore the complexion of a riot of the first magnitude. By the insinuations of the party, and their malignant conduct, it was not strange that in England it was considered as a *London mob* collected in the streets of Boston, with some formidable desperado at their head. After this *fracas*, the custom-house officers repaired immediately to Castle William, as did the board of commissioners. This fortress was about a league from the town. From thence they expressed their apprehensions of personal danger, in strong language. Fresh applications were made to general Gage, to hasten on his forces from New York, assuring him that the lives of the officers of the crown were insecure, unless placed beyond the reach of popular resentment,

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by an immediate military aid. In conſequence of theſe repreſentations, ſeveral detachments from Halifax, and two regiments lately from Ireland, were directed to repair to Boſton, with all poſſible diſpatch.

The experience of all ages, and the obſervations both of the hiſtorian and the philoſopher agree, that a ſtanding army is the moſt ready engine in the hand of deſpotiſm, to debaſe the powers of the human mind, and eradicate the manly ſpirit of freedom. The people have certainly every thing to fear from a government, when the ſprings of its authority are fortified only by a ſtanding military force. Wherever an army is eſtabliſhed, it introduces a revolution in manners, corrupts the morals, propagates every ſpecies of vice, and degrades the human character. Threatened with the immediate introduction of this dread calamity, deprived by the diſſolution of their legiſlature of all power to make any legal oppoſition; neglected by their ſovereign, and inſulted by the governor he had ſet over them, much the largeſt part of the community was convinced, that they had no reſource but in the ſtrength of their virtues, the energy of their reſolutions, and the juſtice of their cauſe.

In this ſtate of general apprehenſion, confuſion, and ſuſpenſe, the inhabitants of Boſton again requeſted governor Bernard to convoke

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an aſſembly, and ſuffer the repreſentatives of the whole people to conſult and adviſe at this critical conjuncture. He rejected this application with an air of inſult, and no time was to be loſt. Letters were inſtantly forwarded from the capital, requeſting a delegation of ſuitable perſons to meet in convention from every town in the province before the arrival of the troops, and if poſſible to take ſome ſteps to prevent the fatal effects of theſe dangerous and unprecedented meaſures.

The whole country felt themſelves intereſted, and readily complied with the propoſal. The moſt reſpectable perſons from an hundred and ninety-ſix towns were choſen delegates to aſſemble at Boſton, on the twenty-ſecond of September. They accordingly met at that time and place; as ſoon as they were convened, the governor ſent them an angry meſſage, admoniſhing them immediately to diſperſe, aſſuring them "the king was determined to maintain "his entire ſovereignty over the province,— "that their preſent meeting might be in conſe- "quence of their ignorance,—but that if after "this admonition, they continued their *uſurpa- "tion*, they might repent their temerity, as he "was determined to aſſert the authority of the "crown in a more public manner, if they con- "tinued to diſregard this authoritative warn- "ing."

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He however found he had not men to deal with, either ignorant of law, regardleſs of its ſanctions, or terrified by the frowns of power. The convention made him a ſpirited but decent anſwer, containing the reaſons of their aſſembling, and the line of conduct they were determined to purſue in ſpite of every menace. The governor refuſed to receive their reply; he urged the illegality of the aſſembly, and made uſe of every ſubterfuge to interrupt their proceedings.

Their ſituation was indeed truly delicate, as well as dangerous. The convention was a body not known in the conſtitution of their government, and in the ſtrict ſenſe of law it might be ſtyled a treaſonable meeting. They ſtill profeſſed fealty to the crown of Britain; and though the principle had been ſhaken by injuries, that might have juſtified a more ſudden renunciation of loyalty, yet their's was cheriſhed by a degree of religious ſcruple, amidſt every ſpecies of inſult. Thus while they wiſhed to ſupport this temper, and to cheriſh their former affection, they felt with poignancy the invaſion of their rights, and hourly expected the arrival of an armed force, to back the threatenings of their firſt magiſtrate.

Great prudence and moderation however marked the tranſactions of an aſſembly of men

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thus circumſtanced; they could in their preſent ſituation only recapitulate their ſufferings, felt and feared. This they did in a pointed and nervous ſtyle, in a letter addreſſed to Mr. De Berdt,* the agent of the province, reſiding in London. They ſtated the circumſtances that occaſioned their meeting, and a full detail of their proceedings. They incloſed him a petition to the king, and ordered their agent to deliver it with his own hand. The convention then ſeparated, and returned to their reſpective towns, where they impreſſed on their conſtituents the ſame perſeverance, forbearance and magnanimity that had marked their own reſolutions.

Within a few days after their ſeparation, the troops arrived from Halifax. This was indeed a painful era. The American war may be dated from the hoſtile parade of this day; a day which marks with infamy the councils of Britain. At this period, the inhabitants of the colonies almoſt univerſally breathed an unſhaken loyalty to the king of England, and the ſtrongeſt attachment to a country whence they derived their origin. Thus was the aſtoniſhment of the whole province excited, when to the grief and conſternation of the town of Boſton ſeveral regiments were landed, and marched ſword in hand through the principal ſtreets of their city, then in profound peace.

* See letter to Mr. De Berdt, in the journals of the houſe.

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The diſembarkation of the king's troops, which took place on the firſt of October, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-eight, was viewed by a vaſt crowd of ſpectators, who beheld the ſolemn prelude to devaſtation and bloodſhed with a kind of ſullen ſilence, that denoted the deepeſt reſentment. Yet whatever might be the feelings of the citizens, not one among the gazing multitude diſcovered any diſpoſition to reſiſt by arms the power and authority of the king of Great Britain. This appearance of decent ſubmiſſion and order was very unexpected to ſome, whoſe guilty fears had led them to expect a violent and tumultuous reſiſtance to the landing of a large body of armed ſoldiers in the town. The peaceable demeanor of the people was conſtrued, by the party who had brought this evil on the city, as a mark of abject ſubmiſſion.

As they ſuppoſed from the preſent acquieſcent deportment, that the ſpirit of the inhabitants was totally ſubdued on the firſt appearance of military power, they conſequently roſe in their demands. General Gage arrived from New York ſoon after the king's troops reached Boſton. With the aid of the governor, the chief juſtice of the province, and the ſheriff of the county of Suffolk, he forced quarters for his ſoldiers in all the unoccupied houſes in the town. The council convened on this occaſion oppoſed the meaſure; but to ſuch a height

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was the inſolence of power puſhed, by their paſſionate, vindictive and wrong-headed governor, that in ſpite of the remonſtrances of ſeveral magiſtrates, and the importunities of the people, he ſuffered the ſtate houſe, where the archives of the province were depoſited, to be improved as barracks for the king's troops. Thus the members of council, the magiſtrates of the town and the courts of juſtice were daily interrupted, and frequently challenged in their way to their ſeveral departments in buſineſs, by military centinels poſted at the doors.

A ſtanding army thus placed in their capital, their commerce fettered, their characters traduced, their repreſentative body prevented meeting, the united petitions of all ranks that they might be convened at this critical conjuncture rejected by the governor; and ſtill threatened with a further augmentation of troops to enforce meaſures in every view repugnant to the principles of the Britiſh conſtitution; little hope remained of a peaceful accommodation.

The moſt rational arguments had been urged by the legiſlative aſſemblies, by corporate bodies, aſſociations, and individual characters of eminence, to ſhake the arbitrary ſyſtem that augured evils to both countries. But their addreſſes were diſdainfully rejected; the king and the court of Great Britain appeared equally deaf to the cry of millions, who only aſked a reſtoration of their rights. At the ſame time

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every worthleſs incendiary, who, taking advantage of theſe miſerable times, croſſed the Atlantic with a tale of accuſation againſt his country, was liſtened to with attention, and rewarded with ſome token of royal favor.

In this ſituation, no remedy appeared to be left ſhort of an appeal to the ſword, unleſs an entire ſuſpenſion of that commercial intercourſe, which had contributed ſo much to the glory and grandeur of Britain, could be effected throughout the colonies. As all the American continent was involved in one common danger, it was not found difficult to obtain a general combination againſt all further importations from England, a few articles only excepted. The mercantile body through all the provinces entered into ſolemn engagements, and plighted their faith and honor to each other, and to their country, that no orders ſhould be forwarded by them for Britiſh or India goods within a limited term, except for certain ſpecified articles of neceſſary uſe. Theſe engagements originated in Boſton, and were for a time ſtrictly adhered to through all the colonies. Great encouragement was given to American manufactures, and if pride of apparel was at all indulged, it was in wearing the ſtuffs fabricated in their own looms. Harmony and union, prudence and economy, induſtry and virtue, were inculcated in their publications, and enforced by the example of the moſt reſpectable characters.

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In conſequence of theſe determinations, the clamors of the Britiſh manufacturers aroſe to tumult in many parts of the kingdom; but no artifice was neglected to quiet the trading part of the nation. There were ſome Americans, who by letters encouraged adminiſtration to perſevere in their meaſures relative to the colonies, aſſuring them in the ſtrongeſt terms, that the interruption of commerce was but a temporary ſtruggle, or rather an effort of deſpair. No one in the country urged his opinion with more indiſcreet zeal than Andrew Oliver, Eſq. then ſecretary in the Maſſachuſetts. He ſuggeſted, "that government ſhould ſtipulate with "the merchants in England to purchaſe large "quantities of goods proper for the American "market; agreeing beforehand to allow them "a premium equal to the advance of their "ſtock in trade, if the price of their goods was "not ſufficiently enhanced by a tenfold demand "in future, even though the goods might lay "on hand, till this temporary ſtagnation of "buſineſs ſhould ceaſe." He concluded his political rhapſody with this inhuman boaſt to his correſpondent;* "*By ſuch a ſtep the game will "be up with my countrymen.*"

The prediction on both ſides the Atlantic, that this combination, which depended wholly

* See the original letters of Mr. Oliver to Mr. Whately and others, which were afterwards publiſhed in a pamphlet; alſo, in the Britiſh Remembrancer, 1773.

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1768. on the commercial part of the community, could not be of long duration, proved indeed too true. A regard to private intereſt ever operates more forcibly on the bulk of mankind than the ties of honor, or the principles of patriotiſm; and when the latter are incompatible with the former, the balance ſeldom hangs long in equilibrio. Thus it is not uncommon to ſee virtue, liberty, love of country, and regard to character, ſacrificed at the ſhrine of wealth.

1769. The winter following this ſalutary combination, a partial repeal of the act impoſing duties on certain articles of Britiſh manufacture took place. On this it immediately appeared that ſome in New York had previouſly given conditional orders to their correſpondents, that if the meaſures of parliament ſhould in any degree be relaxed, that without farther application they ſhould furniſh them with large quantities of goods. Several in the other colonies had diſcovered as much avidity for an early importation as the Yorkers. They had given ſimilar orders, and both received larger ſupplies than uſual, of Britiſh merchandize, early in the ſpring one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-nine. The people of courſe conſidered the agreement nullified by the conduct of the merchants, and the intercourſe with England for a time went on as uſual, without any check. Thus, by breaking through the agreement within the limited time of reſtriction, a meaſure was

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defeated, which, had it been religiouſly obſerved, might have prevented the tragical conſequences which enſued.

After this event, a ſeries of altercation and abuſe, of recrimination and ſuſpenſe, was kept up on both ſides the Atlantic, without much appearance of lenity on the one ſide, or deciſion on the other. There appeared little diſpoſition in parliament to relax the reins of government, and leſs in the Americans to yield implicit obedience. But whether from an opinion that they had taken the lead in oppoſition, or whether from their having a greater proportion of Britiſh ſycophants among themſelves, whoſe artful inſinuations operated againſt their country, or from other concurring circumſtances, the Maſſachuſetts was ſtill the principal butt of miniſterial reſentment. It is therefore neceſſary yet to continue a more particular detail of the ſituation of that province.

As their charter was not yet annihilated, governor Bernard found himſelf under a neceſſity, as the period of annual election approached, to iſſue writs to convene a general aſſembly. Accordingly a new houſe of repreſentatives met at Boſton as uſual on the thirty-firſt of May, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-nine. They immediately petitioned the governor to remove the military parade that ſurrounded the ſtate-houſe, urging, that ſuch a hoſtile appear-

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ance might over-awe their proceedings, and prevent the freedom of election and debate.

A unanimous reſolve paſſed, "that it was "the opinion of the houſe, that placing an armed force in the metropolis while the general "aſſembly is there convened, is a breach of "privilege, and totally inconſiſtent with the "dignity and freedom with which they ought "to deliberate and determine;"—adding, "that "they meant ever to ſupport their conſtitutional rights, that they ſhould never voluntarily "recede from their juſt claims, contained both "in the letter and ſpirit of the conſtitution."

After ſeveral meſſages both from the council and houſe of repreſentatives, the governor, ever obſtinate in error, declared he had no authority over the king's troops, nor ſhould he uſe any influence to have them removed.* Thus by expreſs acknowledgment of the firſt magiſtrate, it appeared that the military was ſet ſo far above the civil authority, that the laſt was totally unable to check the wanton exerciſe of this newly eſtabliſhed power in the province. But the aſſembly peremptorily determined to do no buſineſs while thus inſulted by the planting of cannon at the doors of the ſtate-houſe, and interrupted in their ſolemn deliberations by the noiſy evolutions of military diſcipline.

* Journals of the houſe, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-nine.

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The royal charter required that they ſhould proceed to the choice of a ſpeaker, and the election of a council, the firſt day of the meeting of the aſſembly. They had conformed to this as uſual, but proteſted againſt its being conſidered as a precedent on any future emergency. Thus amidſt the warmeſt expreſſions of reſentment from all claſſes, for the indignity offered a free people by this haughty treatment to their legiſlature, the governor ſuffered them to ſit ſeveral weeks without doing buſineſs; and at laſt compelled them to give way to an armed force, by adjourning the general aſſembly to Cambridge.

The internal ſtate of the province required the attention of the houſe at this critical exigence of affairs. They therefore on their firſt meeting at Cambridge, reſolved, "That it was "their opinion that the Britiſh conſtitution ad- "mits no armed force within the realm, but "for the purpoſe of offenſive or defenſive *war*. "That placing troops in the colony in the midſt "of profound peace was a breach of privilege, "an infraction on the natural rights of the peo- "ple, and manifeſtly ſubverſive of that happy "form of government they had hitherto enjoy- "ed. That the honor, dignity, and ſervice "of the ſovereign ſhould be attended to by "that aſſembly, ſo far as was conſiſtent with "the juſt rights of the people, their own digni- "ty, and the freedom of debate; but that pro-

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"ceeding to buſineſs while an armed force was "quartered in the province, was not a derelic- "tion of the privileges legally claimed by the "colony, but from neceſſity, and that no undue "advantage ſhould be taken from their com- "pliance."

After this, they had not time to do any other buſineſs, before two meſſages of a very extraordinary nature, in their opinion, were laid before them.* The firſt was an order under the ſign-manual of the king, that Mr. Bernard ſhould repair to England to lay the ſtate of the province before him. To this meſſage was tacked a requeſt from the governor, that as he attended his majeſty's pleaſure as commander in chief of the province, his ſalary might be continued, though abſent. The ſubſtance of the other meſſage was an account of general Gage's expenditures in quartering his troops in the town of Boſton; accompanied by an unqualified demand for the eſtabliſhment of funds for the diſcharge thereof. The governor added, that he was requeſted by general Gage to make requiſition for future proviſion for quartering his troops within the town.

The ſubſequent reſolves of the houſe on theſe meſſages were conformable to the uſual ſpirit of that aſſembly. They warmly cenſured

* Journals of the firſt ſeſſion at Cambridge.

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both governor Bernard and general Gage for wantonly acting againſt the conſtitution; charged them with making falſe and injurious repreſentations againſt his majeſty's faithful ſubjects, and diſcovering on all occaſions a moſt inimical diſpoſition towards the colonies. They obſerved that general Gage had raſhly and impertinently intermeddled with affairs altogether out of his line, and that he had betrayed a degree of ignorance equal to his malice, when he preſumed to touch on the civil police of the province. They complained heavily of the arbitrary deſigns of government, the introduction of a ſtanding army, and the encroachments on civil liberty; and concluded with a declaration replete with ſentiments of men conſcious of their own freedom and integrity, and deeply affected with the injuries offered their country. They obſerved, that to the utmoſt of their power they ſhould vindicate the rights of human nature and the privileges of Engliſhmen, and explicitly declared that duty to their conſtituents forbade a compliance with either of theſe meſſages. This clear, decided anſwer being delivered, the governor ſummoned the houſe to attend, and after a ſhort, angry, and threatening ſpeech, he prorogued the aſſembly to January, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy.

Governor Bernard immediately embarked for Europe, from whence he never more re-

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turned to a country, he had, by his arbitrary diſpoſition and indiſcreet conduct, inflamed to a degree, that required both judgment and prudence to cool, perhaps beyond the abilities, and certainly incompatible with the views, of the adminiſtration in being.

The province had little reaſon to ſuppoſe, that conſiderations of the intereſt of the people had any part in the recal or detention of this miſchievous emiſſary. His reception at court, the ſummary proceedings with regard to his impeachment and trial, and the character of the man appointed to ſucceed him, ſtrongly counteracted ſuch a flattering opinion. Notwithſtanding the high charges that had been alleged againſt governor Bernard, he was acquitted by the king and council, without allowing time to the aſſembly to ſupport their accuſations, honored with a title, and rewarded with a penſion of one thouſand pounds ſterling per annum on the Iriſh eſtabliſhment.

Governor Bernard had reaſon to be perfectly ſatisfied with the ſucceſs of his appointment to the government of Maſſachuſetts, as it related to his perſonal intereſt. His conduct there procured him the ſmiles of the Britiſh court, an honorary title, and a penſion for life. Beſides this, the legiſlature of that province had in the early part of his adminiſtration, in a moment of complacency, or perhaps from digeſted

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policy, with a hope of bribing him to his duty and ſtimulating him to defend their invaded rights, made him a grant of a very large tract of land, the whole of the iſland of Mount Deſert. This was afterwards reclaimed by a Madame Gregoire, in right of her anceſtors, who had obtained a patent of ſome part of that country in the early days of European emigration. But as governor Bernard's property in America had never been confiſcated, the general aſſembly of Maſſachuſetts afterwards granted to his ſon, Sir John Bernard, who ſtill poſſeſſes this territory, two townſhips of land near the river Kennebeck, in lieu of the valuable iſle recovered by Madame Gregoire.

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CHAPTER IV.

Character of Mr. Hutchinſon.—Appointed Governor of Maſſachuſetts.—The attempted Aſſaſſination of Mr. Otis.—Tranſactions on the fifth of March, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy.—Arrival of the Eaſt India Company's Tea-Ships.—Eſtabliſhment of Committees of Correſpondence.—The Right of Parliamentary Taxation without Repreſentation urged by Mr. Hutchinſon.—Articles of Impeachment reſolved on in the Houſe of Repreſentatives againſt Governor Hutchinſon and Lieutenant Governor Oliver.—Chief Juſtice of the Province impeached.—Boſton Port-Bill.—Governor Hutchinſon leaves the Province.

IT is ever painful to a candid mind to exhibit the deformed features of its own ſpecies; yet truth requires a juſt portrait of the public delinquent, though he may poſſeſs ſuch a ſhare of private virtue as would lead us to eſteem the man in his domeſtic character, while we deteſt his political, and execrate his public tranſactions.

The barriers of the Britiſh conſtitution broken over, and the miniſtry encouraged by their ſovereign, to purſue the iniquitous ſyſtem againſt the colonies to the moſt alarming extremities, they probably judged it a prudent expedient, in order to curb the refractory ſpirit of the Maſſachuſetts, perhaps bolder in ſentiment and earlier in oppoſition than ſome of the other colonies, to appoint a man to preſide

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over them who had renounced the *quondam* ideas of public virtue, and facrificed all principle of that nature on the altar of ambition. CHAP. IV. 1769.

Soon after the recal of Mr. Bernard, Thomas Hutchinſon, Eſq. a native of Boſton, was appointed to the government of Maſſachuſetts. All who yet remember his pernicious adminiſtration and the fatal conſequences that enſued, agree, that few ages have produced a more fit inſtrument for the purpoſes of a corrupt court. He was dark, intriguing, inſinuating, haughty and ambitious, while the extreme of avarice marked each feature of his character. His abilities were little elevated above the line of mediocrity; yet by dint of induſtry, exact temperance, and indefatigable labor, he became maſter of the accompliſhments neceſſary to acquire popular fame. Though bred a merchant, he had looked into the origin and the principles of the Britiſh conſtitution, and made himſelf acquainted with the ſeveral forms of government eſtabliſhed in the colonies; he had acquired ſome knowledge of the *common law* of England, diligently ſtudied the intricacies of *Machiavelian* policy, and never failed to recommend the Italian maſter as a model to his adherents.

Raiſed and diſtinguiſhed by every honor the people could beſtow, he ſupported for ſeveral years the reputation of integrity, and generally

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decided with equity in his judicial capacity;* and by the appearance of a tenacious regard to the religious inſtitutions of his country, he courted the public *eclat* with the moſt profound diſſimulation, while he engaged the affections of the lower claſſes by an amiable civility and condeſcenſion, without departing from a certain gravity of deportment miſtaken by the vulgar for *ſanctity*.

The inhabitants of the Maſſachuſetts were the lineal deſcendants of the *puritans*, who had ſtruggled in England for liberty as early as the reign of Edward the ſixth; and though obſcured in the ſubſequent bloody perſecutions, even Mr. Hume has acknowledged that to them England is indebted for the liberty ſhe enjoys.† Attached to the religious forms of their anceſtors, equally diſguſted with the hierarchy of the church of England, and prejudiced by the ſeverities their fathers had experienced before their emigration, they had, both by education and principle, been always led to conſider the religious as well as the political characters of thoſe they deputed to the higheſt truſt. Thus a profeſſion of their own religious mode of worſhip, and ſometimes a tincture of ſuperſtition, was with many a higher recommendation than brilliant talents. This

* Judge of probate for the county of Suffolk, and chief juſtice of the ſupreme court.

† Hume's Hiſtory of England.

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accounts in ſome meaſure for the unlimited confidence long placed in the ſpecious accompliſhments of Mr. Hutchinſon, whoſe character was not thoroughly inveſtigated until ſome time after governor Bernard left the province.

But it was known at St. James's, that in proportion as Mr. Hutchinſon gained the confidence of adminiſtration, he loſt the eſteem of the beſt of his countrymen; for this reaſon, his advancement to the chair of government was for a time poſtponed or concealed, leſt the people ſhould conſider themſelves inſulted by ſuch an appointment, and become too ſuddenly irritated. Appearances had for ſeveral years been ſtrong againſt him, though it was not then fully known that he had ſeized the opportunity to undermine the happineſs of the people, while he had their fulleſt confidence, and to barter the liberties of his country by the moſt ſhameleſs duplicity. This was ſoon after diſplayed beyond all contradiction, by the recovery of ſundry letters to adminiſtration under his ſignature.

Mr. Hutchinſon was one of the firſt in America who felt the full weight of popular reſentment. His furniture was deſtroyed, and his houſe levelled to the ground, in the tumults occaſioned by the news of the ſtamp-act. Ample compenſation was indeed afterwards made

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him for the loſs of property, but the ſtrong prejudices againſt his political character were never eradicated.

All pretences to moderation on the part of the Britiſh government now laid aſide, the full appointment of Mr. Hutchinſon to the government of the Maſſachuſetts was publickly announced at the cloſe of the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-nine. On his promotion the new governor uniformly obſerved a more high-handed and haughty tone than his predeceſſor. He immediately, by an explicit declaration, avowed his independence on the people, and informed the legiſlative that his majeſty had made ample proviſion for his ſupport without their aid or ſuffrages. The vigilant guardians of the rights of the people directly called upon him to relinquiſh the unconſtitutional ſtipend, and to accept the free grants of the general aſſembly for his ſubſiſtence, as uſually practiſed. He replied that an acceptance of this offer would be a breach of his inſtructions from the king. This was his conſtant apology for every arbitrary ſtep.

Secure of the favor of his ſovereign, and now regardleſs of the popularity he had formerly courted with ſuch avidity, he decidedly rejected the idea of reſponſibility to, or dependence on, the people. With equal inflexibility he diſregarded all arguments uſed for the removal of the troops from the capital, and permiſſion to the

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council and houſe of repreſentatives to return to the uſual ſeat of government. He ſilently heard their ſolicitations for this purpoſe, and as if with a deſign to pour contempt on their ſupplications and complaints, he within a few days after withdrew a garriſon, in the pay of the province, from a ſtrong fortreſs in the harbour of Boſton; placed two regiments of the king's troops in their ſtead, and delivered the keys of the caſtle to colonel Dalrymple, who then commanded the king's troops through the province.

Theſe ſteps, which ſeemed to bid defiance to complaint, created new fears in the minds of the people. It required the utmoſt vigilance to quiet the murmurs and prevent the fatal conſequences apprehended from the ebullitions of popular reſentment. But cool, deliberate and perſevering, the two houſes continued to reſolve, remonſtrate, and proteſt, againſt the infractions on their charter, and every dangerous innovation on their rights and privileges. Indeed the intrepid and ſpirited conduct of thoſe, who ſtood forth undaunted at this early criſis of hazard, will dignify their names ſo long as the public records ſhall remain to witneſs their patriotic firmneſs.

Many circumſtances rendered it evident that the miniſterial party wiſhed a ſpirit of oppoſition to the deſigns of the court might break out into violence, even at the expenſe of blood. This they thought would in ſome degree have

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ſanctioned a meaſure ſuggeſted by one of the faction in America, devoted to the arbitrary ſyſtem, "That ſome method muſt be deviſed, "to take off the original *incendiaries** whoſe "writings inſtilled the poiſon of ſedition "through the vehicle of the Boſton Gazette."†

Had this advice been followed, and a few gentlemen of integrity and ability, who had ſpirit ſufficient to make an effort in favor of their country in each colony, have been ſeized at the ſame moment, and immolated early in the conteſt on the bloody altar of power, perhaps Great Britain might have held the continent in ſubjection a few years longer.

That they had meaſures of this nature in contemplation there is not a doubt. Several

* See Andrew Oliver's letter to one of the miniſtry, dated February 13, 1769.

† This gazette was much celebrated for the freedom of its diſquiſitions in favor of civil liberty. It has been obſerved that "it will be a treaſury of political intelligence "for the hiſtorians of this country. Otis, Thacher, Dex- "ter, Adams, Warren and Quincy, Doctors Samuel "Cooper and Mayhew, ſtars of the firſt magnitude in our "northern hemiſphere, whoſe glory and brightneſs diſtant "ages will admire; theſe gentlemen of character and in- "fluence offered their firſt eſſays to the public through "the medium of the Boſton Gazette, on which account "the paper became odious to the friends of prerogative, "but not more diſguſting to the tories and high church "than it was pleaſing to the whigs." See collection of the Maſſachuſetts Hiſtorical Society.

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inſtances of a leſs atrocious nature confirmed this opinion, and the turpitude of deſign which at this period actuated the court party was clearly evinced by the attempted aſſaſſination of the celebrated Mr. Otis, juſtly deemed the firſt martyr to American freedom; and truth will enrol his name among the moſt diſtinguiſhed patriots who have expired on the "blood-"ſtained theatre of human action."

This gentleman, whoſe birth and education was equal to any in the province, poſſeſſed an eaſy fortune, independent principles, a comprehenſive genius, ſtrong mind, retentive memory, and great penetration. To theſe endowments may be added that extenſive profeſſional knowledge, which at once forms the character of the complete civilian and the able ſtateſman.

In his public ſpeeches, the fire of eloquence, the acumen of argument, and the lively ſallies of wit, at once warmed the boſom of the ſtoic and commanded the admiration of his enemies. To his probity and generoſity in the public walks were added the charms of affability and improving converſe in private life. His humanity was conſpicuous, his ſincerity acknowledged, his integrity unimpeached, his honor unblemiſhed, and his patriotiſm marked with the diſintereſtedneſs of the Spartan. Yet he was ſuſceptible of quick feelings and warm paſſions, which in the ebullitions of zeal for the intereſt of his country ſometimes betrayed him into

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unguarded epithets that gave his foes an advantage, without benefit to the cauſe that lay neareſt his heart.

He had been affronted by the partizans of the crown, vilified in the public papers, and treated (after his reſignation of office*) in a manner too groſs for a man of his ſpirit to paſs over with impunity. Fearleſs of conſequences, he had always given the world his opinions both in his writings and his converſation, and had recently publiſhed ſome ſevere ſtrictures on the conduct of the commiſſioners of the cuſtoms and others of the miniſterial party, and bidding defiance to reſentment, he ſupported his allegations by the ſignature of his name.

A few days after this publication appeared, Mr. Otis with only one gentleman in company was ſuddenly aſſaulted in a public room, by a band of ruffians armed with ſwords and bludgeons. They were headed by John Robinſon, one of the commiſſioners of the cuſtoms. The lights were immediately extinguiſhed, and Mr. Otis covered with wounds was left for dead, while the aſſaſſins made their way through the crowd which began to aſſemble; and before their crime was diſcovered, fortunately for themſelves, they eſcaped ſoon enough to take refuge on board one of the king's ſhips which then lay in the harbor.

* Office of judge advocate in governor Bernard's adminiſtration.

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In a ſtate of nature, the ſavage may throw his poiſoned arrow at the man, whoſe ſoul exhibits a tranſcript of benevolence that upbraids his own ferocity, and may boaſt his blood-thirſty deed among the hordes of the foreſt without diſgrace; but in a high ſtage of civilization, where humanity is cheriſhed, and politeneſs is become a ſcience, for the dark aſſaſſin then to level his blow at ſuperior merit, and ſcreen himſelf in the arms of power, reflects an odium on the government that permits it, and puts human nature to the bluſh.

The party had a complete triumph in this guilty deed; for though the wounds did not prove mortal, the conſequences were tenfold worſe than death. The future uſefulneſs of this diſtinguiſhed *friend* of his country was deſtroyed, reaſon was ſhaken from its throne, genius obſcured, and the great man in ruins lived ſeveral years for his friends to weep over, and his country to lament the deprivation of talents admirably adapted to promote the higheſt intereſts of ſociety.

This cataſtrophe ſhocked the feelings of the virtuous not leſs than it raiſed the indignation of the brave. Yet a remarkable ſpirit of forbearance continued for a time, owing to the reſpect ſtill paid to the opinions of this unfortunate gentleman, whoſe voice though always oppoſed to the ſtrides of deſpotiſm was ever loud againſt all tumultuous and illegal proceedings.

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He was after a partial recovery ſenſible himſelf of his incapacity for the exerciſe of talents that had ſhone with peculiar luſtre, and often invoked the meſſenger of death to give him a ſudden releaſe from a life become burdenſome in every view but when the calm interval of a moment permitted him the recollection of his own integrity. In one of thoſe intervals of beclouded reaſon he forgave the murderous band, after the principal ruffian had aſked pardon in a court of juſtice;* and at the interceſſion of the gentleman whom he had ſo groſsly abuſed, the people forebore inflicting that ſummary vengeance which was generally thought due to ſo black a crime.

Mr. Otis lived to ſee the independence of America, though in a ſtate of mind incapable of enjoying fully the glorious event which his own exertions had precipitated. After ſeveral years of mental derangement, as if in conſequence of his own prayers, his great ſoul was inſtantly ſet free by a flaſh of lightning, from the evils in which the love of his country had involved him. His death took place in May, one thouſand ſeven hundred and eighty

* On a civil proceſs commenced againſt him, John Robinſon was adjudged to pay five thouſand pounds ſterling damages; but Mr. Otis deſpiſing all pecuniary compenſation, relinquiſhed it on the culprit's aſking pardon and ſetting his ſignature to a very humble acknowledgment.

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three, the ſame year the peace was concluded between Great Britain and America.* CHAP. IV. 1770.

Though the parliamentary ſyſtem of colonial regulations was in many inſtances ſimilar, and equally aimed to curtail the privileges of each province, yet no military force had been expreſsly called in aid of civil authority in any of them, except the Maſſachuſetts. From this cir-

* A ſiſter touched by the tendereſt feelings, while ſhe has thought it her duty to do juſtice to a character neglected by ſome, and miſrepreſented by other hiſtorians, can exculpate herſelf from all ſuſpicion of partiality by the teſtimony of many of his countrymen who witneſſed his private merit and public exertions. But ſhe will however only ſubjoin a paragraph of a letter written to the author of theſe annals, on the news of Mr. Otis's death, by John Adams, Eſq. then miniſter plenipotentiary from the United States to the court of France.

"*Paris, September* 10th, 1783.

"It was, Madam, with very afflicting ſentiments I "learned the death of Mr. Otis, my worthy maſter. Extra- "ordinary in death as in life, he has left a character that "will never die while the memory of the American revolu- "tion remains; whoſe foundation he laid with an energy, "and with thoſe maſterly abilities, which no other man poſ- "ſeſſed."

The reader alſo may not be diſpleaſed at an extemporary exclamation of a gentleman of poetic talents, on hearing of the death of Mr. Otis.

"When God in anger ſaw the ſpot,
"On earth to Otis given,
"In thunder as from Sinai's mount,
"He ſnatch'd him back to heaven."

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cumſtance ſome began to flatter themſelves that more lenient diſpoſitions were operating in the mind of the king of Great Britain, as well as in the parliament and the people towards America in general.

They had grounded theſe hopes on the ſtrong aſſurances of ſeveral of the plantation governors, particularly lord Botetourt, who then preſided in Virginia. He had in a ſpeech to the aſſembly of the colony, in the winter of one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-nine, declared himſelf ſo confident that full ſatisfaction would be given to the provinces in the future conduct of adminiſtration, that he pledged his faith to ſupport to the laſt hour of his life the intereſt of America. He obſerved, that he grounded his own opinions and his aſſurances to them, on the intimations of the confidential ſervants of the king which authorized him to promiſe redreſs. He added, that to his certain knowledge his ſovereign had rather part with his crown, than preſerve it by deception.

The credulity of this gentleman was undoubtedly impoſed upon; however, the Virginians, ever ſteady and ſyſtematic in oppoſition to tyranny, were for a time highly gratified by thoſe aſſurances from their firſt magiſtrate. But their vigilance was ſoon called into exerciſe by the mal-adminiſtration of a ſucceeding governor, though the fortitude of this pat-

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riotic colony was never ſhaken by the frown of any deſpotic maſter or maſters. Some of the other colonies had liſtened to the ſoothing language of moderation uſed by their chief executive officers, and were for a ſhort time influenced by that, and the flattering hopes held up by the governor of Virginia. CHAP. IV. 1770.

But before the period to which we have arrived in the narration of events, theſe flattering appearances had evaporated with the breath of the courtier. The ſubſequent conduct of adminiſtration baffled the expectations of the credulous. The hand of government was more heavily felt through the continent; and from South Carolina to Virginia, and from Virginia to New Hampſhire, the mandate of a miniſter was the ſignal for the diſſolution of their aſſemblies. The people were compelled to reſort to conventions and committees to tranſact all public buſineſs, to unite in petitions for relief, or to take the neceſſary preparatory ſteps if finally obliged to reſiſt by arms.

In the mean time the inhabitants of the town of Boſton had ſuffered almoſt every ſpecies of inſult from the Britiſh ſoldiery; who, countenanced by the royal party, had generally found means to ſcreen themſelves from the hand of the civil officers. Thus all authority reſted on the point of the ſword, and the partizans of the crown triumphed for a time in the plenitude of

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military power. Yet the meaſure and the manner of poſting troops in the capital of the province, had rouſed ſuch jealouſy and diſguſt, as could not be ſubdued by the ſcourge that hung over their heads. Continual bickerings took place in the ſtreets between the ſoldiers and the citizens; the inſolence of the firſt, which had been carried ſo far as to excite the African ſlaves to murder their maſters, with the promiſe of impunity,* and the indiſcretion of the laſt, was often productive of tumults and diſorder that led the moſt cool and temperate to be apprehenſive of conſequences of the moſt ſerious nature.

No previous outrage had given ſuch a general alarm, as the commotion on the fifth of March, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy. Yet the accident that created a reſentment which emboldened the timid, determined the wavering, and awakened an energy and deciſion that neither the artifices of the courtier, nor the terror of the ſword could eaſily overcome, aroſe from a trivial circumſtance; a circumſtance which but from the conſideration that theſe minute accidents frequently lead to

* Capt. Wilſon of the 29th regiment was detected in the infamous practice; and it was proved beyond a doubt by the teſtimony of ſome reſpectable citizens, who declared on oath, that they had accidentally witneſſed the offer of reward to the blacks, by ſome ſubaltern officers, if they would rob and murder their maſters.

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the moſt important evènts, would be beneath the dignity of hiſtory to record.

A centinel poſted at the door of the cuſtom houſe had ſeized and abuſed a boy, for caſting ſome opprobrious reflections on an officer of rank; his cries collected a number of other lads, who took the childiſh revenge of pelting the ſoldier with ſnow-balls. The main-guard ſtationed in the neighborhood of the cuſtom-houſe, was informed by ſome perſons from thence, of the riſing tumult. They immediately turned out under the command of a captain Preſton, and beat to arms. Several *fracas* of little moment had taken place between the ſoldiery and ſome of the lower claſs of inhabitants, and probably both were in a temper to avenge their own private wrongs. The cry of fire was raiſed in all parts of the town, the mob collected, and the ſoldiery from all quarters ran through the ſtreets ſword in hand, threatening and wounding the people, and with every appearance of hoſtility, they ruſhed furiouſly to the centre of the town.

The ſoldiers thus ready for execution, and the populace grown outrageous, the whole town was juſtly terrified by the unuſual alarm. This naturally drew out perſons of higher condition, and more peaceably diſpoſed, to inquire the cauſe. Their conſternation can ſcarcely be deſcribed, when they found orders were given to

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fire promiſcuouſly among the unarmed multitude. Five or ſix perſons fell at the firſt fire, and ſeveral more were dangerouſly wounded at their own doors.

Theſe ſudden popular commotions are ſeldom to be juſtified, and their conſequences are ever to be dreaded. It is needleſs to make any obſervations on the aſſumed rights of royalty, in a time of peace to diſperſe by military murder the diſorderly and riotous aſſemblage of a thoughtleſs multitude. The queſtion has frequently been canvaſſed; and was on this occaſion thoroughly diſcuſſed, by gentlemen of the firſt profeſſional abilities.

The remains of loyalty to the ſovereign of Britain were not yet extinguiſhed in American boſoms, neither were the feelings of compaſſion, which ſhrunk at the idea of human carnage, obliterated. Yet this outrage enkindled a general reſentment that could not be diſguiſed; but every method that prudence could dictate, was uſed by a number of influential gentlemen to cool the ſudden ferment, to prevent the populace from attempting immediate vengeance, and to prevail on the multitude to retire quietly to their own houſes, and wait the deciſions of law and equity. They effected their humane purpoſes; the people diſperſed; and captain Preſton and his party were taken into cuſtody of the civil magiſtrate. A judicial inquiry was af-

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terwards made into their conduct; and ſo far from being actuated by any partial or undue bias, ſome of the firſt counſellors at law engaged in their defence; and after a fair and legal trial they were acquitted of premeditated or wilful murder, by a jury of the county of Suffolk.

The people, not diſmayed by the blood of their neighbors thus wantonly ſhed, determined no longer to ſubmit to the inſolence of military power. Colonel Dalrymple, who commanded in Boſton, was informed the day after the riot in King Street, "that he muſt "withdraw his troops from the town within a "limited term, or hazard the conſequences."

The inhabitants of the town aſſembled in Faneuil Hall, where the ſubject was diſcuſſed with becoming ſpirit, and the people unanimouſly reſolved, that no armed force ſhould be ſuffered longer to reſide in the capital; that if the king's troops were not immediately withdrawn by their own officers, the governor ſhould be requeſted to give orders for their removal, and thereby prevent the neceſſity of more rigorous ſteps. A committee from the body was deputed to wait on the governor, and requeſt him to exert that authority which the exigencies of the times required from the ſupreme magiſtrate. Mr. Samuel Adams, the chairman of the committee, with a pathos and addreſs peculiar to

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himſelf, expoſed the illegality of quartering troops in the town in the midſt of peace; he urged the apprehenſions of the people, and the fatal conſequences that might enſue if their removal was delayed.

But no arguments could prevail on Mr. Hutchinſon; who either from timidity, or ſome more cenſurable cauſe, evaded acting at all in the buſineſs, and grounded his refuſal on a pretended want of authority.* After which, colonel Dalrymple, wiſhing to compromiſe the matter, conſented that the twenty-ninth regiment, more culpable than any other in the late tumult, ſhould be ſent to Caſtle Iſland. This conceſſion was by no means ſatisfactory; the people, inflexible in their demands, inſiſted that not one Britiſh ſoldier ſhould be left within the town; their requiſition was reluctantly complied with, and within four days the whole army decamped. It is not to be ſuppoſed, that this compliance of Britiſh veterans originated in their fears of an injured and incenſed people, who were not yet prepared to reſiſt by arms. They were undoubtedly ſenſible they had exceeded their orders, and anticipated the deſigns of their maſter; they had raſhly begun the ſlaughter of Americans, and enkindled the flames of civil war in a country, where allegiance had not yet been renounced.

* See extracts of Mr. Hutchinſon's letters, Appendix, No. VIII.

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After the haſty retreat of the king's troops, Boſton enjoyed for a time, a degree of tranquillity to which they had been ſtrangers for many months. The commiſſioners of the cuſtoms and ſeveral other obnoxious characters retired with the army to Caſtle William, and their governor affected much moderation and tenderneſs to his country; at the ſame time he neglected no opportunity to ripen the preſent meaſures of adminiſtration, or to ſecure his own intereſt, cloſely interwoven therewith. The duplicity of Mr. Hutchinſon was ſoon after laid open by the diſcovery of a number of letters under his ſignature, written to ſome individuals in the Britiſh cabinet. Theſe letters detected by the vigilance of ſome friends in England, were procured and ſent on to America.*

Previous to this event there were many perſons in the province who could not be fully convinced, that at the ſame period when he had put on the guiſe of compaſſion to his country, when he had promiſed all his influence to obtain ſome relaxation of the coercive ſyſtem, that at that moment Mr. Hutchinſon ſhould be ſo loſt to the ideas of ſincerity, as to be artfully plotting new embarraſſments to the colonies in general, and the moſt miſchievous projects againſt the province he was entruſted to govern. Thus convicted as the grand incendiary

* The original letters which detected his treachery were procured by Doct. Franklin, and publiſhed in a pam-

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who had ſown the ſeeds of diſcord, and cheriſhed the diſpute between Great Britain and the colonies, his friends bluſhed at the diſcovery, his enemies triumphed, and his partizans were confounded. In theſe letters, he had expreſſed his doubt of the propriety of ſuffering the colonies to enjoy all the privileges of the parent ſtate: he obſerved, that "there muſt be an *abridgment* of *Engliſh liberties*, in colonial adminiſtration," and urged with malignant art the neceſſity of the reſumption of the charter of Maſſachuſetts.

Through this and the ſucceeding year the Britiſh nation were much divided in opinion relative to public meaſures, both at home and abroad. Debates and animoſities ran high in both houſes of parliament. Many of their beſt orators had come forward in defence of America, with that eloquence and preciſion which

phlet at Boſton. They may alſo be ſeen in the Britiſh Annual Regiſter, and in a large collection of hiſtorical papers printed in London, entitled the Remembrancer. The agitation into which many were thrown by the tranſmiſſion of theſe letters, produced important conſequences. Doct. Franklin was ſhamefully vilified and abuſed in an outrageous *philippic* pronounced by Mr. Wedderburne, afterwards lord Loughborough. Threats, challenges, and duels took place, but it was not diſcovered by what means theſe letters fell into the hands of Doct. Franklin, who ſoon after repaired to America, where he was eminently ſerviceable in aid of the public cauſe of his native country.

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proved their anceſtry, and marked the ſpirit of a nation that had long boaſted their own freedom. But reaſon and argument are feeble barriers againſt the will of a monarch, or the determinations of potent ariſtocratical bodies. Thus the ſyſtem was fixed, the meaſures were ripening, and a miniſter had the boldneſs to declare publickly, that "America ſhould be brought to "the footſtool of parliament,"* and humbled beneath the pedeſtal of majeſty.

The inhabitants of the whole American continent, appeared even at this period nearly ready for the laſt appeal, rather than longer to ſubmit to the mandates of an overbearing miniſter of ſtate, or the execution of his corrupt deſigns. The maſterly writers of this enlightened age, had ſo clearly defined the nature and origin of government, the equal claims and natural rights of man, the principles of the Britiſh conſtitution, and the freedom the ſubject had a right to enjoy thereby; that it had become a prevailing opinion, that government and legiſlation were inſtituted for the benefit of ſociety at large, and not for the emolument of a few; and that whenever prerogative began to ſtretch its rapacious arm beyond certain bounds, it was an indiſpenſable duty to reſiſt.

Strongly attached to Great Britain, not only by the impreſſion of ancient forms, and the hab-

* Lord North's ſpeech in the houſe of commons.

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its of ſubmiſſion to government, but by religion, manners, language, and conſanguinity, the colonies ſtill ſtood ſuſpended in the pacific hope, that a change of miniſtry or a new parliament, might operate in their favor, and reſtore tranquillity, by the removal of the cauſes and the inſtruments of their ſufferings.

Not yet conſcious of her own ſtrength, and ſcarcely ambitious of taking an independent rank among the nations, America ſtill cheriſhed the flattering ideas of reconciliation. But theſe expectations were finally diſſipated, by the repeated attempts to reduce the colonies to unlimited ſubmiſſion to the ſupreme juriſdiction of parliament, and the illegal exactions of the crown, until by degrees all parliamentary deciſions became as indifferent to an American ear, as the reſcripts of a Turkiſh divan.

The tame acquieſcence of the colonies, would doubtleſs have given great advantages to the corrupt party on one ſide of the Atlantic, while their aſſiduous agents on the other, did not revolt at the meaneſt and moſt wicked compliances to facilitate the deſigns of their employers, or to gratify their own inordinate paſſion for power and wealth. Thus for a conſiderable time, a ſtruggle was kept up between the power of one country, and the perſeverance of the other, without a poſſibility of calculating conſequences.

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A particular detail of the altercations between the repreſentatives, the burgeſſes, and the provincial governors, the remonſtrances of the people, the reſolves of their legiſlative bodies, and the diſſolution of their aſſemblies by the *fiat* of a governor, the prayers of corporate and occupational ſocieties, or the petitions of more public and reſpectable bodies; the provocations on the ſide of government, and the riotous, and in ſome degree, unjuſtifiable proceedings of the populace, in almoſt every town on the continent, would be rather tedious than entertaining, in a compendious narrative of the times. It may therefore, be well to paſs over a year or two, that produced nothing but a ſameneſs of complaint, and a ſimilarity of oppoſition, on the one ſide; and on the other, a ſyſtematic effort, to puſh the darling meaſure of an American taxation, while neither party had much reaſon to promiſe themſelves a ſpeedy deciſion.

It has already been obſerved, that the revenue acts which had occaſioned a general murmur, had been repealed, except a ſmall duty on all India teas, by which a claim was kept up to tax the colonies at pleaſure, whenever it ſhould be thought expedient. This was an article uſed by all ranks in America; a luxury of ſuch univerſal conſumption, that adminiſtration was led to believe, that a monopoly of the ſales of tea, might be ſo managed, as to become a productive ſource of revenue.

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It was generally believed that governor Hutchinſon had ſtipulated for the agency for his ſons, as they were the firſt in commiſſion; and that he had ſolicited for them, and obtained this odious employment, by a promiſe, that if they were appointed ſole agents to the Eaſt India company, the ſales ſhould be ſo executed as to give perfect ſatisfaction, both to them and to adminiſtration. All communities furniſh examples of men ſufficiently baſe, to ſhare in the ſpoils of their country; nor was it difficult to find ſuch in every colony, who were ready enough to execute this miniſterial job. Thus in conſequence of the inſinuations of thoſe intereſted in the ſucceſs of the meaſure, a number of ſhips were employed by government, to tranſport a large quantity of teas into each of the American colonies. The people throughout the continent, apprized of the deſign, and conſidering at that time, all teas a pernicious article of commerce, ſummoned meetings in all the capital towns, and unanimouſly reſolved to reſiſt the dangerous project by every legal oppoſition, before they proceeded to any extremities.

The firſt ſtep taken in Boſton, was to requeſt the conſignees to refuſe the commiſſion. The inhabitants warmly remonſtrated againſt the teas being landed in any of their ports, and urged the return of the ſhips, without permitting them to break bulk. The commiſſioners at

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New York, Philadelphia, and in ſeveral other colonies, were applied to with ſimilar requeſts; moſt of them complied. In ſome places the teas were ſtored on proper conditions, in others, ſent back without injury. But, in Maſſachuſetts, their difficulties were accumulated by the reſtleſs ambition of ſome of her own degenerate ſons. Not the ſmalleſt impreſſion was made on the feelings of their governor, by the united ſupplications of the inhabitants of Boſton and its environs. Mr. Hutchinſon, who very well knew that virtue is ſeldom a ſufficient reſtraint to the paſſions, but that, in ſpite of patrotiſm, reaſon, or religion, the ſcale too frequently preponderates in favor of intereſt or appetite, perſiſted in the execution of his favorite project. As by force of habit, this drug had become almoſt a neceſſary article of diet, the demand for teas in America was aſtoniſhingly great, and the agents in Boſton, ſure of finding purchaſers, if once the weed was depoſited in their ſtores, haughtily declined a reſignation of office, and determined when the ſhips arrived, to receive and diſpoſe of their cargoes at every hazard.

Before either time or diſcretion had cooled the general diſguſt, at the intereſted and ſupercilious behaviour of theſe young pupils of intrigue, the long expected ſhips arrived, which were to eſtabliſh a precedent, thought dangerouſly conſequential. Reſolved not to yield to the ſmalleſt veſtige of parliamentary taxation,

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1770. however disguised, a numerous assembly of the most respectable people of Boston and its neighborhood, repaired to the public hall, and drew up a remonstrance to the governor, urging the necessity of his order, to send back the ships without suffering any part of their cargoes to be landed. His answer confirmed the opinion, that he was the instigator of the measure; it irritated the spirits of the people, and tended more to encrease, than allay the rising ferment.

1773. A few days after this the factors had the precaution to apply to the governor and council for protection, to enable them to receive and dispose of their consignments. As the council refused to act in the affair, the governor called on colonel Hancock, who commanded a company of cadets, to hold himself in readiness to assist the civil magistrate, if any tumult should arise in consequence of any attempt to land the teas. This gentleman, though professedly in opposition to the court, had oscillated between the parties until neither of them at that time, had much confidence in his exertions. It did not however appear, that he had any inclination to obey the summons; neither did he explicitly refuse; but he soon after resigned his commission, and continued in future, unequivocally opposed to the ministerial system. On the appearance of this persevering spirit among the people, governor Hutchinson again resorted to his usual arts of chicanery and deception; he affected a mildness of deport-

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ment, and by many equivocal delays detained the ſhips, and endeavoured to diſarm his countrymen of that manly reſolution which was their principal *fort*.

The ſtorage or detention of a few cargoes of teas is not an object in itſelf ſufficient to juſtify a detail of ſeveral pages; but as the ſubſequent ſeverities towards the Maſſachuſetts were grounded on what the miniſtry termed their *refractory behaviour* on this occaſion; and as thoſe meaſures were followed by conſequences of the higheſt magnitude both to Great Britain and the colonies, a particular narration of the tranſactions of the town of Boſton is indiſpenſable. There the ſword of civil diſcord was firſt drawn, which was not re-ſheathed until the emancipation of the thirteen colonies from the yoke of foreign domination was acknowledged by the diplomatic ſeals of the firſt powers in Europe. This may apologize, if neceſſary, for the appearance of locality in the preceding pages, and for its farther continuance in regard to a colony, on which the bittereſt cup of miniſterial wrath was poured for a time, and where the energies of the human mind were earlier called forth, than in ſeveral of the ſiſter ſtates.

Not intimidated by the frowns of greatneſs, nor allured by the ſmiles of intrigue, the vigilance of the people was equal to the importance of the event. Though expectation was equally

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awake in both parties, yet three or four weeks elapſed in a kind of *inertia;* the one ſide flattered themſelves with hopes, that as the ſhips were ſuffered to be ſo long unmoleſted, with their cargoes entire, the point might yet be obtained; the other thought it poſſible, that ſome impreſſion might yet be made on the governor, by the ſtrong voice of the people.

Amidſt this ſuſpenſe a rumour was circulated, that admiral Montague was about to ſeize the ſhips, and diſpoſe of their cargoes at public auction, within twenty-four hours. This ſtep would as effectually have ſecured the duties, as if ſold at the ſhops of the conſignees, and was judged to be only a *fineſſe*, to place them there on their own terms. On this report, convinced of the neceſſity of preventing ſo bold an attempt, a vaſt body of people convened ſuddenly and repaired to one of the largeſt and moſt commodious churches in Boſton; where, previous to any other ſteps, many fruitleſs meſſages were ſent both to the governor and the conſignees, whoſe timidity had prompted them to a ſeclu-ſion from the public eye. Yet they continued to refuſe any ſatisfactory anſwer; and while the aſſembled multitude were in quiet conſultation on the ſafeſt mode to prevent the ſale and conſumption of an herb, *noxious* at leaſt to the political conſtitution, the debates were interrupted by the entrance of the ſheriff with an order from the governor, ſtyling them an illegal aſſembly, and directing their immediate diſperſion.

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This authoritative mandate was treated with great contempt, and the ſheriff inſtantly hiſſed out of the houſe. A confuſed murmur enſued, both within and without the walls; but in a few moments all was again quiet, and the leaders of the people returned calmly to the point in queſtion. Yet every expedient ſeemed fraught with inſurmountable difficulties, and evening approaching without any decided reſolutions, the meeting was adjourned without day.

Within an hour after this was known abroad, there appeared a great number of perſons, clad like the aborigines of the wilderneſs, with tomahawks in their hands, and clubs on their ſhoulders, who without the leaſt moleſtation marched through the ſtreets with ſilent ſolemnity, and amidſt innumerable ſpectators, proceeded to the wharves, boarded the ſhips, demanded the keys, and with much deliberation knocked open the cheſts, and emptied ſeveral thouſand weight of the fineſt teas into the ocean. No oppoſition was made, though ſurrounded by the king's ſhips; all was ſilence and diſmay.

This done, the proceſſion returned through the town in the ſame order and ſolemnity as obſerved in the outſet of their attempt. No other diſorder took place, and it was obſerved, the ſtilleſt night enſued that Boſton had enjoyed for many months. This unexpected event

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ſtruck the miniſterial party with rage and aſtoniſhment; while, as it ſeemed to be an attack upon private property, many who wiſhed well to the public cauſe could not fully approve of the meaſure. Yet perhaps the laws of ſelf-preſervation might juſtify the deed, as the exigencies of the times required extraordinary exertions, and every other method had been tried in vain, to avoid this diſagreeable alternative. Beſides it was alleged, and doubtleſs it was true, the people were ready to make ample compenſation for all damages ſuſtained, whenever the unconſtitutional duty ſhould be taken off, and other grievances radically redreſſed. But there appeared little proſpect that any conciliatory advances would ſoon be made. The officers of government diſcovered themſelves more vindictive than ever: animoſities daily increaſed, and the ſpirits of the people were irritated to a degree of alienation, even from their tendereſt connexions, when they happened to differ in political opinion.

By the frequent diſſolution of the general aſſemblies, all public debate had been precluded, and the uſual regular intercourſe between the colonies cut off. The modes of legiſlative communication thus obſtructed, at a period when the neceſſity of harmony and concert was obvious to every eye, no ſyſtematical oppoſition to gubernatorial intrigues, ſupported by the king and parliament of Great Britain, was to be ex-

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pected without the utmoſt concord, confidence, and union of all the colonies. Perhaps no ſingle ſtep contributed ſo much to cement the union of the colonies, and the final acquiſition of independence, as the eſtabliſhment of committees of correſpondence. This ſupported a chain of communication from New Hampſhire to Georgia, that produced unanimity and energy throughout the continent.

As in theſe annals there has yet been no particular mention made of this inſtitution, it is but juſtice to name at once the author, the origin, and the importance of the meaſure.

At an early period of the conteſt, when the public mind was agitated by unexpected events, and remarkably pervaded with perplexity and anxiety, James Warren, Eſq. of Plymouth firſt propoſed this inſtitution to a private friend, on a viſit at his own houſe.* Mr. Warren had been an active and influential member of the general aſſembly from the beginning of the troubles in America, which commenced ſoon after the demiſe of George the ſecond. The principles and firmneſs of this gentleman were well known, and the uprightneſs of his character had ſufficient weight to recommend the meaſure. As ſoon as the propoſal was communicated to a number of gentlemen in Boſton, it was adopted with zeal, and ſpread with the rapidity of

* Samuel Adams, Eſq. of Boſton.

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enthuſiaſm, from town to town, and from province to province.* Thus an intercourſe was eſtabliſhed, by which a ſimilarity of opinion, a connexion of intereſt, and a union of action appeared, that ſet oppoſition at defiance, and defeated the machinations of their enemies through all the colonies.

The plan ſuggeſted was clear and methodical; it propoſed that a public meeting ſhould be called in every town; that a number of perſons ſhould be ſelected by a plurality of voices; that they ſhould be men of reſpectable characters, whoſe attachment to the great cauſe of America had been uniform; that they ſhould be veſted by a majority of ſuffrages with power to take cognizance of the ſtate of commerce, of the intrigues of *toryiſm*, of litigious ruptures that might create diſturbances, and every thing elſe that might be thought to militate with the rights of the people, and to promote every thing that tended to general utility.

The buſineſs was not tardily executed. Committees were every where choſen, who were directed to keep up a regular correſpondence with each other, and to give information of all intelligence received, relative to the proceedings of

* The general impulſe at this time ſeemed to operate by ſympathy, before conſultation could be had; thus it appeared afterwards that the vigilant inhabitants of Virginia had concerted a ſimilar plan about the ſame period.

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adminiſtration, ſo far as they affected the intereſt of the Britiſh colonies throughout America. The truſt was faithfully and diligently diſcharged, and when afterwards all legiſlative authority was ſuſpended, the courts of juſtice ſhut up, and the laſt traits of Britiſh government annihilated in the colonies, this new inſtitution became a kind of juridical tribunal. Its injunctions were influential beyond the hopes of its moſt ſanguine friends, and the recommendations of committees of correſpondence had the force of law. Thus, as deſpotiſm frequently ſprings from anarchy, a regular democracy ſometimes ariſes from the ſevere encroachments of deſpotiſm.*

This inſtitution had given ſuch a general alarm to the adherents of adminiſtration, and had been replete with ſuch important conſequences through the union, that it was juſtly dreaded by thoſe who oppoſed it, and conſidered by them as the moſt important bulwark of freedom. A repreſentation of this eſtabliſhment, and its effects, had been tranſmitted to England, and laid before the king and parliament, and Mr. Hutchinſon had received his majeſty's diſapprobation of the meaſure. With the hope of impeding its farther operation, by announcing the frown and the cenſure of royalty, and for the diſcuſſion of ſome other important queſtions, the governor had thought proper to convene the council and houſe of

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repreſentatives, to meet in January one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-three.

The aſſembly of the preceding year had paſſed a number of very ſevere reſolves, when the original letters mentioned above, written by governor Hutchinſon and lieutenant-governor Oliver were detected, ſent back to the Maſſachuſetts, and laid before the houſe. They had obſerved that "the letters contained "wicked and injurious miſrepreſentations, de-"ſigned to influence the miniſtry and the na-"tion, and to excite jealouſies in the breaſt of "the king, againſt his faithful ſubjects."* They had proceeded to an impeachment, and unanimouſly requeſted, that his majeſty would be pleaſed to remove both Mr. Thomas Hutchinſon and Mr. Andrew Oliver from their public functions in the province, forever.† But before they had time to complete their ſpirited meaſures, the governor had as uſual diſſolved the aſſembly. This was a ſtretch of power, and a manifeſtation of reſentment, that had been ſo frequently exerciſed both by Mr. Hutchinſon and his predeceſſor, that it was never unexpected, and now totally diſregarded. This mode of conduct was not confined to the Maſſachuſetts; it was indeed the common ſignal of reſentment exhibited by moſt of the colonial governors:

* See 11th reſolve in the ſeſſions of one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-two.

† Journals of the houſe.

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they immediately diſſolved the legiſlative aſſemblies on the diſcovery of energy, enterpriſe, or patriotiſm, among the members.

When the new houſe of aſſembly met at Boſton the preſent year, it appeared to be compoſed of the principal gentlemen and landholders in the province; men of education and ability, of fortune and family, of integrity and honor; jealous of the infringement of their rights, and the faithful guardians of a free people.

Their independency of mind was ſoon put to the teſt. On the opening of the new ſeſſion, the firſt communication from the governor was, that he had received his majeſty's expreſs diſapprobation of all *committees* of *correſpondence*; and to enforce the diſpleaſure of the *monarch*, he very indiſcreetly ventured himſelf to cenſure with much warmth this inſtitution, and every other ſtand that the colonies had unitedly made to miniſterial and parliamentary invaſions. To complete the climax of his own preſumption, he in a long and labored ſpeech imprudently agitated the grand queſtion of a parliamentary right of taxation without repreſentation;* he endeavoured to juſtify, both by law and precedent, every arbitrary ſtep that had been taken for ten years paſt to reduce the colonies to a diſgraceful ſubjugation.

* Appendix, No. IX. Extracts from governor Hutchinſon's letters urging his deſigns.

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This gave a fair opening to the friends of their country which they did not neglect, to diſcuſs the illegality, injuſtice, and impolicy of the late innovations. They entered on the debate with freedom of inquiry, ſtated their claims with clearneſs and preciſion, and ſupported them with ſuch reaſoning and perſpicuity, that a man of leſs hardineſs than Mr. Hutchinſon would not have made a ſecond attempt to juſtify ſo odious a cauſe, or to gain ſuch an unpopular point by dint of argument. But whether owing to his own intemperate zeal, or whether inſtigated by his ſuperiors on the other ſide the Atlantic, to bring on the diſpute previous to the diſcloſure of ſome extraordinary meaſures then in agitation, is uncertain. However this was, he ſupported his opinions with induſtry and ingenuity, and not diſcouraged by ſtrong oppoſition, he ſpun out the debate to a tedious and ridiculous length. Far from terminating to the honor of the governor, his officious defence of adminiſtration ſerved only to indicate the neceſſity of the moſt guarded watchfulneſs againſt the machinations of powerful and deſigning men; and fanned, rather than checked the *amor patriæ* characteriſtic of the times.

Soon after this altercation ended, the repreſentative body took cognizance of an affair that had given great diſguſt, and created much uneaſineſs through the province. By the royal

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charter granted by William and Mary, the governor, lieutenant-governor and ſecretary were appointed by the king; the council were choſen by the repreſentatives of the people, the governor being allowed a negative voice; the judges, juſtices, and all other officers, civil and military, were left to his nomination, and appointed by him, with the advice and conſent of a board of counſellors. But as it is always neceſſary in a free government, that the people ſhould retain ſome means in their own hands, to check any unwarrantable exerciſe of power in the executive, the legiſlature of Maſſachuſetts had always enjoyed the reaſonable privilege of paying their own officers according to their ability, and the ſervices rendered to the public.

It was at this time well known that Mr. Hutchinſon had ſo far ingratiated himſelf as to entitle him to peculiar favor from the crown; and by a handſome ſalary from the king, he was rendered entirely independent of the people. His brother-in-law alſo, the lieutenant-governor, had obtained by miſrepreſentations, thought by ſome to have been little ſhort of perjury,* a penſion which he had long ſolicited; but chagrin at the detection of his letters, and the diſcovery of his duplicity, ſoon put a period

* See lieutenant-governor Oliver's affidavit, on the council books.

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to a life that might have been uſeful and exemplary, had he confined his purſuits only to the domeſtic walks of life.

A ſtrong family as well as political connexion, had for ſome time been forming among thoſe who had been writing in favor of colonial regulations, and urging the creation of a *patrician rank*, from which all officers of government ſhould in future be ſelected. Intermarriages among their children in the near degree of conſanguinity before the parties were of age for maturity of choice, had ſtrengthened the union of intereſts among the candidates for preferment. Thus by a kind of compact, almoſt every department of high truſt as it became vacant by reſignation, ſuſpenſion or death, was filled by ſome relation or dependent of governor Hutchinſon; and no other qualification was required except a ſuppleneſs of opinion and principle that could readily bend to the meaſures of the court.

But it was more recently diſcovered that the judges of the ſuperior court, the near relations or coadjutors of Mr. Hutchinſon, and few of them more ſcrupulouſly delicate with regard to the violation of the rights of their country than himſelf, had taken advantage of the times, and ſucceſsfully inſinuated that the dignity of their offices muſt be ſupported by an allowance from the crown ſufficient to enable them to execute

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the deſigns of government, excluſively of any dependence on the general aſſembly. In conſequence of theſe repreſentations, the judges were appointed to hold their places during the king's pleaſure, and a yearly ſtipend was granted them to be paid out of the new revenue to be raiſed in America.

The general court had not been convened after the full diſcloſure of this ſyſtem before the preſent period; of courſe no conſtitutional oppoſition could be made on the infraction of their charter, until a legal aſſembly had an opportunity to meet and deliberate. Uncertain how long the intriguing ſpirit of the governor would permit them to continue in exiſtence, the ſitting aſſembly judged it neceſſary early in the ſeſſion to proceed to a parliamentary inquiry into the conduct of their judiciary officers. Accordingly the judges of the ſupreme court were called upon to receive the grants for their ſervices as uſual from the treaſury of the province; to renounce all unconſtitutional ſalaries, and to engage to receive no pay, penſion or emolument in reward of ſervices as juſtices of the court of judicature, but from the free grants of the legiſlative aſſembly.

Two of the judges, Trowbridge and Ropes, readily complied with the demand, and relinquiſhed the offenſive ſtipend. A third was William Cuſhing, Eſq. a gentleman rendered

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reſpectable in the eyes of all parties by his profeſſional abilities and general integrity. He was a ſenſible, modeſt man, well acquainted with law, but remarkable for the ſecrecy of his opinions: this kept up his reputation through all the ebullitions of diſcordant parties. He readily reſigned the royal ſtipend without any obſervations of his own; yet it was thought at the time that it was with a reluctance that his taciturnity could not conceal. By this ſilent addreſs he retained the confidence of the court faction, nor was he leſs a favorite among the republicans. He was immediately placed on the bench of juſtice after the aſſumption of government in the Maſſachuſetts.*

The next that was called forward was Foſter Hutchinſon, a brother of the governor's, a man of much leſs underſtanding, and as little public virtue; in ſhort, remarkable for nothing but the malignancy of his heart. He, after much altercation and abuſe of the general aſſembly, complied with a very ill grace with the requiſitions of the houſe.

* The talents, the manners, the probity, and the urbanity of Mr. Cuſhing procured his advancement to the ſupreme bench under the new conſtitution afterwards adopted by the United States. In this ſtation he was uſeful to his country, and reſpected by every claſs through all the changes of party and opinion which he lived to ſee.

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But the chief ſeat of juſtice in this extraordinary adminiſtration was occupied by a man* unacquainted with law, and ignorant of the firſt principles of government. He poſſeſſed a certain credulity of mind that eaſily ſeduced him into erroneous opinions; at the ſame time a frigid obſtinacy of temper that rendered him incapable of conviction. His inſinuating manners, his ſuperficial abilities, and his implicit devotion to the governor, rendered him a fit inſtrument to give ſanction by the forms of law to the moſt atrocious acts of arbitrary power. Equally deaf to the dictates of patriotiſm and to the united voice of the people, he peremptorily refuſed to liſten to the demands of their repreſentatives; and boldly declared his reſolution to receive an annual grant from the crown of England in ſpite of the opinions or reſentment of his country: he urged as an excuſe, the depreciation of his private fortune by his judicial attentions. His ſtation was important and influential, and his temerity was conſidered as holding a bribe to execute the corrupt meaſures of the Britiſh court.

The houſe of repreſentatives not interrupted in their ſyſtem, nor intimidated by the preſumption of the delinquent, proceeded directly to exhibit articles of impeachment againſt Peter Oliver, Eſq. accuſing him of high crimes and miſdemeanors, and laid their complaints before

* Peter Oliver, Eſq. a brother-in-law of the governor's.

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the governor and council. On a diviſion of the houſe there appeared ninety-two members in favour of the meaſure, and only eight againſt it. The governor, as was expected, both from perſonal attachment and a full approbation of Mr. Oliver's conduct, refuſed to act or ſit on the buſineſs; of courſe all proceedings were for a time ſuſpended.

When a detail of theſe ſpirited meaſures reached England, exaggerated by the colorings of the officers of the crown, it threw the nation, more eſpecially the trading part, into a temporary fever. The miniſtry roſe in their reſentment, and entered on the moſt ſevere ſteps againſt the Maſſachuſetts, and more particularly the town of Boſton. It was at this period that lord North uſhered into the houſe of commons the memorable bill for ſhutting up the port of Boſton, alſo the bill for better regulating the government of the Maſſachuſetts.

The port-bill enacted that after the firſt of June one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-four, "Every veſſel within the points Alderton "and Nahant, (the boundaries of the harbor of "Boſton,) ſhould depart within ſix hours, un-"leſs laden with food or fuel." That no merchandize ſhould be taken in or diſcharged at any of the ſtores, wharves, or quays, within thoſe limits; and that any ſhip, barge or boat, attempting to convey from other parts of

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America, either ſtores, goods or merchandize to Boſton, (one of the largeſt maritime towns on the continent) ſhould be deemed a legal forfeiture to the crown.

This act was oppoſed with becoming zeal by ſeveral in both houſes of parliament, who ſtill inherited the generous ſpirit of their anceſtors, and dared to ſtand forth the defenders of Engliſh liberty, in the moſt perilous ſeaſons. Though the cruelty and injuſtice of this ſtep was warmly criminated, the miniſter and his party urged the neceſſity of ſtrong meaſures; nor was it difficult to obtain a large majority to enforce them. An abſtract of an act for the more impartial adminiſtration of juſtice in the province of Maſſachuſetts, accompanied the port-bill. Thus by one of thoſe ſevere and arbitrary acts, many thouſands of the beſt and moſt loyal ſubjects of the houſe of Brunſwick were at once cut off from the means of ſubſiſtence; poverty ſtared in the face of affluence, and a long train of evils threatened every rank. No diſcriminations were made; the innocent were equally involved with the real or imputed guilty, and reduced to ſuch diſtreſſes afterwards, that, but from the charitable donations of the other colonies, multitudes muſt have inevitably periſhed.

The other bill directed, that on an indictment for riot, reſiſtance of the magiſtrate, or

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impeding the laws of revenue in the ſmalleſt degree, any perſon, at the option of the governor, or in his abſence, the lieutenant-governor, might be tranſported to Great Britain for trial, and there be ordered to wait amidſt his foes, the deciſions of ſtrangers unacquainted with the character of the priſoner, or the turpitude of a crime, that ſhould ſubject him to be tranſported a thouſand leagues from his own vicinity, for a final deciſion on the charges exhibited againſt him. Several of the ſouthern colonies remonſtrated warmly againſt thoſe novel proceedings towards the Maſſachuſetts, and conſidered it as a common cauſe. The houſe of burgeſſes in Virginia vigorouſly oppoſed this meaſure, and paſſed reſolutions expreſſing "their excluſive "right to tax their conſtituents, and their "right to petition their ſovereign for redreſs "of grievances, and the lawfulneſs of procuring the concurrence of the other colonies in "praying for the royal interpoſition in favour "of the violated rights of America: and that "all trials for treaſons, or for any crime "whatſoever, committed in that colony, ought "to be before his majeſty's courts within the "ſaid colony; and that the ſeizing any perſon "reſiding in the ſaid colony, ſuſpected of any "crime whatſoever committed therein, and "ſending ſuch perſon to places beyond the ſea "to be tried, was highly derogatory of the "rights of Britiſh ſubjects."

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Theſe acts were to continue in full force until ſatisfaction ſhould be made to the Eaſt India company for the loſs of their teas; nor were any aſſurances given, that in caſe of ſubmiſſion and compliance, they ſhould be repealed. The indignation which naturally aroſe in the minds of the people on theſe unexpected and accumulated grievances, was truly inexpreſſible. It was frequently obſerved, that the only melioration of the preſent evils was, that the recal of Mr. Hutchinſon accompanied the bills, and his leaving the province at the ſame period the port-bill was to be put in operation, ſeemed to impreſs a dawn of hope from time, if not from his immediate ſucceſſor.

Every hiſtorical record will doubtleſs witneſs that he was the principal author of the ſufferings of the unhappy Boſtonians, previous to the convulſions which produced the revolution. So deeply riveted was this opinion among his enraged countrymen, that many apprehended the ſummary vengeance of an incenſed populace would not ſuffer ſo notorious a parricide to repair quietly to England. Yet ſuch were the generous and compaſſionate feelings of a people too virtuous to puniſh without a legal proceſs, that he eſcaped the blow he had reaſon to fear would overtake him, when ſtripped of authority, and no longer acting as the repreſentative of *majeſty*.

Chagrined by the loſs of place, mortified by the neglect of ſome, and apprehenſive from the

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reſentment of others, he retired to a ſmall village in the neighborhood of Boſton, and ſecluded himſelf from obſervation until he embarked for London. This he did on the ſame memorable day when, by act of parliament, the blockade of Boſton took place. Before his departure, the few partizans that ſtill adhered to the man and his principles, procured by much aſſiduity a complimentary addreſs, thanking him for paſt *ſervices*, and held up to him the idea, that by his *talents* he might obtain a redreſs of grievances, which they well knew had been drawn on their country by the agency of Mr. Hutchinſon. Much deriſion fell on the character of this group of flatterers, who were long diſtinguiſhed only by the appellation of *Hutchinſon's addreſſers*.

Mr. Hutchinſon furniſhed with theſe pitiful credentials, left his native country forever. On his arrival in England, he was juſtified and careſſed by his employers; and notwithſtanding the criminality of his political conduct had been ſo fully evinced by the detection and recovery of his original letters, his impeachment, which was laid before the lords of the privy-council, was conſidered by them in a very frivolous light. A profeſſional character, by ſome thought to have been hired for the purpoſe, was permitted to abuſe the petitioners and their agent in the groſſeſt terms ſcurrility could invent; and the lords reported, that "the pe-

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"tition was groundleſs, vexatious, and ſcanda-
"lous, and calculated only for the ſeditious
"purpoſes of keeping up a ſpirit of diſcontent
"and clamour in the province; that nothing
"had been laid before them which did or
"could, in their opinion, in any manner or in
"any degree impeach the honour, integrity, or
"conduct of the governor or lieutenant-gover-
"nor;" who had been at the ſame time impeached.

But the operation of his meaſures, while governor of the Maſſachuſetts, was ſo productive of misfortune to Great Britain, as well as to the united colonies, that Mr. Hutchinſon ſoon became the object of diſguſt to all parties. He did not live to ſee the independence of America eſtabliſhed, but he lived long enough to repent in bitterneſs of ſoul, the part he had acted againſt a country once diſpoſed to reſpect his character. After his mind had been involved many months in a ſtate of chagrin, diſappointment and deſpair, he died on the day the riots in London, excited by lord George Gordon, were at the height, in the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and eighty. Thoſe of the family who ſurvived their unhappy father remained in obſcurity in England.

It muſt however be acknowledged that governor Hutchinſon was uniform in his political conduct. He was educated in reverential ideas

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of monarchic government, and conſidered himſelf the ſervant of a king who had entruſted him with very high authority. As a true diſciple of paſſive obedience, he might think himſelf bound to promote the deſigns of his maſter, and thus he might probably releaſe his conſcience from the obligation to aid his countrymen in their oppoſition to the encroachments of the crown. In the eye of candor, he may therefore be much more excuſable, than any who may deviate from their principles and profeſſions of republicaniſm, who have not been biaſſed by the patronage of kings, nor influenced in favor of monarchy by their early prejudices of education or employment.

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CHAPTER V.

General Gage appointed Governor of Maſſachuſetts.—General Aſſembly meet at Salem.—A propoſal for a Congreſs from all the Colonies, to be convened at Philadelphia.—Mandamus Counſellors obliged to reſign.—Reſolutions of the General Congreſs.—Occaſional obſervations.—The Maſſachuſetts attentive to the military Diſcipline of their Youth.—Suffolk Reſolves.—A Provincial Congreſs choſen in the Maſſachuſetts.—Governor Gage ſummons a new Houſe of Repreſentatives.

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THE ſpeculatiſt and the philoſopher frequently obſerve a caſual ſubordination of circumſtances independent of political deciſion, which fixes the character and manners of nations. This thought may be piouſly improved till it leads the mind to view thoſe caſualties, directed by a ſecret hand which points the revolutions of time, and decides the fate of empires. The occaſional inſtruments for the completion of the grand ſyſtem of Providence, have ſeldom any other ſtimulus but the bubble of *fame*, the luſt of *wealth*, or ſome contemptible paſſion that centres in *ſelf*. Even the boſom of virtue warmed by higher principles, and the man actuated by nobler motives, walks in a narrow ſphere of comprehenſion. The ſcale by which the ideas of mortals are circumſcribed generally limits his wiſhes to a certain point without conſideration, or a juſt calculation of extenſive conſequences.

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Thus while the king of Great Britain was contending with the colonies for a three-penny duty on *tea*, and the Americans with the bold ſpirit of patriotiſm reſiſting an encroachment on their rights, the one thought they only aſked a moderate and reaſonable indulgence from their ſovereign, which they had a right to demand if withheld; on the other ſide, the moſt ſevere and ſtrong meaſures were adopted and exerciſed towards the *colonies*, which parliament conſidered as only the proper and neceſſary chaſtiſement of *rebellious ſubjects*. Thus on the eve of one of the moſt remarkable revolutions recorded in the page of hiſtory, a revolution which Great Britain precipitated by her indiſcretion, and which the hardieſt ſons of America viewed in the beginning of oppoſition as a work reſerved for the enterpriſing hand of poſterity, few on either ſide comprehended the magnitude of the conteſt, and fewer ſtill had the courage to name the independence of the American colonies as the *ultimatum* of their *deſigns*.

After the ſpirits of men had been wrought up to a high tone of reſentment, by repeated injuries on the one hand, and an open reſiſtance on the other, there was little reaſon to expect a ready compliance with regulations, repugnant to the feelings, the principles, and the intereſt of Americans. The parliament of Britain therefore thought it expedient to enforce obedience by the ſword, and determined to ſend

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out an armament ſufficient for the purpoſe, early in the ſpring one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-four. The ſubjugation of the colonies by arms, was yet conſidered in England by ſome as a work of ſuch facility, that four or five regiments, with a few ſhips of the line, were equal to the buſineſs, provided they were commanded by officers who had not ſagacity enough to judge of the impropriety of the meaſures of adminiſtration, nor humanity to feel for the miſeries of the people, or liberality to endeavour to mitigate the rigors of government. In conſequence of this opinion, admiral Montague was recalled from Boſton, and admiral Graves appointed to ſucceed, whoſe character was known to be more avaricious, ſevere and vigilant than his predeceſſor, and in all reſpects a more fit inſtrument to execute the weak, indigeſted and irritating ſyſtem.

General Gage, unhappily for himſelf, as will appear in the ſequel, was ſelected as a proper perſon to take the command of all his majeſty's forces in North America, and reduce the country to ſubmiſſion. He had married a lady of reſpectable connexions in New York, and had held with conſiderable reputation for ſeveral years a military employment in the colonies. He was at this time appointed governor and commander in chief of the province of Maſſachuſetts Bay; directed to repair immediately there, and on his arrival to remove the ſeat of

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government from Boſton, and to convene the general aſſembly to meet at Salem, a ſmaller town, ſituated about twenty miles from the capital. The governor, the lieutenant-governor, the ſecretary, the board of commiſſioners, and all crown officers were ordered by ſpecial mandate to leave Boſton, and make the town of Salem the place of their future reſidence.

A few days before the annual election for May, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-four, the new governor of the Maſſachuſetts arrived. He was received by the inhabitants of Boſton with the ſame reſpect that had been uſually ſhewn to thoſe, who were dignified by the title of the king's repreſentative. An elegant entertainment was provided at Faneuil Hall, to which he was eſcorted by a company of cadets, and attended with great civility by the magiſtrates and principal gentlemen of the town; and though jealouſy, diſguſt and reſentment burnt in the boſom of one party, and the moſt unwarrantable deſigns occupied the thoughts of the other, yet the appearance of politeneſs and good humor was kept up through the *etiquette* of the day.

The week following was the anniverſary of the general election, agreeable to charter. The day was uſhered in with the uſual parade, and the houſe of repreſentatives proceeded to buſineſs in the common form: but a ſpecimen of

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the meaſures to be expected from the new adminiſtration appeared in the firſt act of authority recorded of governor Gage. A liſt of counſellors was preſented for his approbation, from which he eraſed the names of thirteen gentlemen out of twenty-eight, unanimouſly choſen by the free voice of the repreſentatives of the people, leaving only a quorum as eſtabliſhed by charter, or it was apprehended, in the exerciſe of his new prerogative he might have annihilated the whole. Moſt of the gentlemen on the negatived liſt had been diſtinguiſhed for their attachment to the ancient conſtitution, and their decided oppoſition to the preſent miniſterial meaſures. Among them was James Bowdoin, Eſq. whoſe underſtanding, diſcernment, and conſcientious deportment, rendered him a very unfit inſtrument for the views of the court, at this extraordinary period. John Winthrop, Holliſian profeſſor of mathematics and natural philoſophy at Cambridge; his public conduct was but the emanation of ſuperior genius, united with an excellent heart, as much diſtinguiſhed for every private virtue as for his attachment to the liberties of a country that may glory in giving birth to a man of his exalted character.* Colonel Otis of Barnſtable, whoſe name has been already mentioned; and John Adams, a

* Dr. Winthrop was lineally deſcended from the firſt governor of the Maſſachuſetts, and inherited the virtues and talents of his great anceſtor, too well known to need any encomium.

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barriſter at law of riſing abilities; his appearance on the theatre of politics commenced at this period; we ſhall meet him again in ſtill more dignified ſtations. Theſe gentlemen had been undoubtedly pointed out as obnoxious to adminiſtration by the predeceſſor of governor Gage, as he had not been long enough in the province to diſcriminate characters.

The houſe of repreſentatives did not think proper to replace the members of council by a new choice; they ſilently bore this indiſcreet exerciſe of authority, ſenſible it was but a prelude to the impending ſtorm. The aſſembly was the next day adjourned for a week; at the expiration of that time, they were directed to meet at Salem. In the interim the governor removed himſelf, and the whole band of revenue and crown officers deſerted the town of Boſton at once, as a place devoted to deſtruction.

Every external appearance of reſpect was ſtill kept up towards the new governor. The council, the houſe, the judiciary officers, the mercantile and other bodies, prepared and offered congratulatory addreſſes as uſual, on the recent arrival of the commander in chief at the ſeat of government. The incenſe was received both at Boſton and Salem with the uſual ſatisfaction, except the addreſs from the remaining board of counſellors; this was checked with aſperity, and the reading it through forbidden, as the compoſi-

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tion contained ſome ſtrictures on adminiſtration, and cenſured rather too freely, for the delicate ear of an infant magiſtrate, the conduct of ſome of his predeceſſors. But this was the laſt compliment of the kind, ever offered by either branch of the legiſlature of the Maſſachuſetts to a governor appointed by the king of Great Britain. No marks of miniſterial reſentment had either humbled or intimidated the ſpirits, nor ſhook the intrepidity of mind neceſſary for the times; and though it was firſt called into action in the Maſſachuſetts it breathed its influence through all the colonies. They all ſeemed equally prepared to ſuffer, and equally determined to reſiſt in uniſon, if no mean but that of abſolute ſubmiſſion was to be the teſt of loyalty.

The firſt day of June, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-four, the day when the Boſton port-bill began to operate, was obſerved in moſt of the colonies with uncommon ſolemnity as a day of faſting and prayer. In all of them, ſympathy and indignation, compaſſion and reſentment, alternately aroſe in every boſom. A zeal to relieve, and an alacrity to ſupport the diſtreſſed *Boſtonians*, ſeemed to pervade the whole continent, except the dependents on the crown, and their partizans, allured by intereſt to adhere to the royal cauſe. There were indeed a few others in every colony led to unite with, and to think favorably of the meaſures of adminiſtration, from their attachment to mon-

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archy, in which they had been educated; and ſome there were who juſtified all things done by the hand of power, either from fear, ignorance, or imbecility.

The ſeſſion at Salem was of ſhort duration, but it was a buſy and an important period. The leading characters in the houſe of repreſentatives contemplated the preſent moment, replete with conſequences of the utmoſt magnitude; they judged it a criſis that required meaſures bold and deciſive, though hazardous, and that the extrication of their country from the deſigns of their enemies, depended much on the conduct of the preſent aſſembly. Their charter was on the point of annihilation; a military governor had juſt arrived, with troops on the ſpot, to ſupport the arbitrary ſyſtems of the court of St. James.

Theſe appearances had a diſagreeable effect on ſome who had before co-operated with the patriots; they began to tremble at the power and the ſeverity of Britain, at a time when firmneſs was moſt required, zeal indiſpenſable, and ſecrecy neceſſary. Yet thoſe who poſſeſſed the energies of mind requiſite for the completion or the defeat of great deſigns, had not their ardor or reſolution ſhaken in the ſmalleſt degree, by either dangers, threats or careſſes. It was a prime object to ſelect a few members of the houſe, that might be truſted moſt confidentially

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on any emergence. This taſk fell on Mr. Samuel Adams of Boſton, and Mr. Warren of Plymouth. They drew off a few choſen ſpirits, who met at a place appointed for a ſecret conference ;* ſeveral others were introduced the enſuing evening, when a diſcuſſion of circumſtances took place. Immediate deciſion, and effectual modes of action were urged, and ſuch caution, energy and diſpatch were obſerved by this daring and dauntleſs ſecret *council*, that on the third evening of their conference their buſineſs was ripe for execution.

This committee had digeſted a plan for a general congreſs from all the colonies, to conſult on the common ſafety of America ;† named their own delegates; and as all preſent were convinced of the neceſſity and expediency of ſuch a convention, they eſtimated the expenſe,

* Among theſe the names of Hancock, Cuſhing, and Hawley, of Sullivan, Robert Payne, and Benjamin Greenleaf of Newburyport, and many others, ſhould not be forgotten, but ought always to be mentioned with reſpect, for their zeal at this critical moment.

† Such a remarkable coincidence of opinion, energy and zeal, exiſted between the provinces of Virginia and the Maſſachuſetts, that their meaſures and reſolutions were often ſimilar, previous to the opportunity for conference. Thus the propriety of a general congreſs had been diſcuſſed and agreed upon by the Virginians, before they were informed of the reſolutions of Maſſachuſetts. Some of the other colonies had contemplated the ſame meaſure, without any previous conſultation.

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and provided funds for the liquidation, prepared letters to the other colonies, enforcing the reaſons for their ſtrong confederacy, and diſcloſed their proceedings to the houſe, before the governmental party had the leaſt ſuſpicion of their deſigns. Before the full diſcloſure of the buſineſs they were upon, the doors of the houſe were locked, and a vote paſſed, that no one ſhould be ſuffered to enter or retire, until a final determination took place on the important queſtions before them. When theſe deſigns were opened, the partizans of adminiſtration then in the houſe, were thunderſtruck with meaſures ſo replete with ability and vigour, and that wore ſuch an aſpect of high and dangerous conſequences.

Theſe tranſactions might have been legally ſtyled *treaſonable*, but loyalty had loſt its influence, and power its terrors. Firm and diſintereſted, intrepid and united, they ſtood ready to ſubmit to the chances of war, and to ſacrifice their devoted lives to preſerve inviolate, and to tranſmit to poſterity, the inherent rights of men, conferred on all by the God of nature, and the privileges of Engliſhmen, claimed by Americans from the ſacred ſanctions of compact.

When the meaſures agitated in the ſecret conference were laid before the houſe of repreſentatives, one of the members a devotee to all governors, pretended a ſudden indiſpoſition, and re-

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queſted leave to withdraw; he pleaded the neceſſities of nature, was releaſed from his uneaſy confinement, and ran immediately to governor Gage with information of the bold and high-handed proceedings of the lower houſe. The governor not leſs alarmed than the ſycophant, at theſe unexpected manœuvres, inſtantly directed the ſecretary to diſſolve the aſſembly by proclamation.

Finding the doors of the houſe cloſed, and no proſpect of admittance for him, the ſecretary deſired the door-keeper to acquaint the houſe he had a meſſage from the governor, and requeſted leave to deliver it. The ſpeaker replied, that it was the order of the houſe, that no one ſhould be permitted to enter on any pretence whatever, before the buſineſs they were upon was fully completed. Agitated and embarraſſed, the ſecretary then read on the ſtairs a proclamation for the immediate diſſolution of the general aſſembly.

The main point gained, the delegates for a congreſs choſen, ſupplies for their ſupport voted, and letters to the other colonies requeſting them to accord in theſe meaſures, ſigned by the ſpeaker, the members cheerfully diſperſed, and returned to their conſtituents, ſatisfied, that notwithſtanding the precipitant diſſolution of the aſſembly, they had done all that the circum-

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ſtances of the times would admit, to remedy the preſent, and guard againſt future evils.

This early ſtep to promote the general intereſt of the colonies, and lay the foundation of union and concord in all their ſubſequent tranſactions, will ever reflect luſtre on the characters of thoſe who conducted it with ſuch firmneſs and deciſion. It was indeed a very critical era: nor were thoſe gentlemen inſenſible of the truth of the obſervation, that "whoever has a "ſtanding army at command, has, or may have "the ſtate." Nor were they leſs ſenſible, that in the preſent circumſtances, while they acknowledged themſelves the ſubjects of the king of England, their conduct muſt be ſtyled *rebellion*, and that death muſt be the inevitable conſequence of defeat. Yet life was then conſidered a trivial ſtake in competition with liberty.

All the old colonies except Georgia, readily acceded to the propoſal of calling a general congreſs; they made immediate exertions that there might be no diſcord in the councils of the ſeveral provinces, and that their oppoſition ſhould be conſiſtent, ſpirited and ſyſtematical. Moſt of them had previouſly laid aſide many of their local prejudices, and by public reſolves and various other modes, had expreſſed their diſguſt at the ſummary proceedings of parliament againſt the Maſſachuſetts. They reprobated the port-bill in terms of deteſtation, raiſed liberal contributions for the ſuffering inhabitants of

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Boſton, and continued their determinations to ſupport that province at every hazard, through the conflict in which they were involved.

In conformity to the coercive ſyſtem, the governors of all the colonies frowned on the ſympathetic part the ſeveral legiſlative bodies had been diſpoſed to take with the turbulent deſcendants, as they were pleaſed to ſtyle the Maſſachuſetts, of *puritans*, *republicans* and *regicides*. Thus moſt of the colonial aſſemblies had been petulantly diſſolved, nor could any applications from the people prevail on the ſupreme magiſtrate, to ſuffer the repreſentatives and burgeſſes to meet, and in a legal capacity deliberate on meaſures moſt conſiſtent with loyalty and freedom. But this perſevering obſtinacy of the governors did not retard the reſolutions of the people; they met in pariſhes, and ſelected perſons from almoſt every town, to meet in provincial conventions, and there to make choice of ſuitable delegates to meet in general congreſs.

The beginning of autumn, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-four, was the time appointed, and the city of Philadelphia choſen, as the moſt central and convenient place, for this body to meet and deliberate, at ſo critical a conjuncture. Yet ſuch was the attachment to Britain, the ſtrength of habit, and the influence of ancient forms; ſuch the reluctant dread

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of ſpilling human blood, which at that period was univerſally felt in America, that there were few, who did not ardently wiſh ſome friendly intervention might yet prevent a rupture, which probably might ſhake the empire of Britain, and waſte the inhabitants on both ſides the Atlantic.

At this early period, there were ſome who viewed the ſtep of their ſummoning a general congreſs, under exiſting circumſtances of peculiar embarraſſment, as a *prelude* to a *revolution* which appeared pregnant with events, that might affect not only the political ſyſtems, but the character and manners of a conſiderable part of the habitable globe.*

America was then little known, her character, ability, and police, leſs underſtood abroad; but ſhe ſoon became the object of attention among the potentates of Europe, the admiration of both the philoſophic and the brave, and her fields the theatre of fame throughout the civilized world. Her principles were diſſeminated; the ſeeds ſown in America ripened in the

* This obſervation has ſince been verified in the remarkable revolution in France;—a ſtruggle for freedom on one ſide, and the combinations of European monarchs on the other, to depreſs and eradicate the ſpirit of liberty caught in America, was diſplayed to the world; nor was any of the combination of princes at the treaty of Pilnitz more perſevering in the cauſe of deſpotiſm than the king of Great Britain.

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more cultivated grounds of Europe, and inſpired ideas among the enſlaved nations that have long trembled at the name of the *baſtile* and the *baſtinado*. This may finally lead to the completion of prophetic predictions, and ſpread univerſal liberty and peace, as far at leaſt as is compatible with the preſent ſtate of human nature.

The wild vagaries of the *perfectibility* of man, ſo long as the paſſions to which the ſpecies are liable play about the hearts of all, may be left to the dreaming *ſcioliſt*, who wanders in ſearch of impracticable theories. He may remain entangled in his own web, while that rational liberty, to which all have a right, may be exhibited and defended by men of principle and heroiſm, who better underſtand the laws of ſocial order.

Through the ſummer previous to the meeting of congreſs, no expreſſions of loyalty to the ſovereign, or affection to the parent ſtate, were neglected in their public declarations. Yet the colonies ſeemed to be animated as it were by one ſoul, to train their youth to arms, to withhold all commercial connexion with Great Britain, and to cultivate that unanimity neceſſary to bind ſociety when ancient forms are relaxed or broken, and the common ſafety required the aſſumption of new modes of government. But while attentive to the regulations of their in-

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ternal economy and police, each colony beheld with a friendly and compaſſionate eye, the ſevere ſtruggles of the Maſſachuſetts, where the arm of power was principally levelled, and the ebullitions of miniſterial reſentment poured forth, as if to terrify the ſiſter provinces into ſubmiſſion.

Not long after the diſſolution of the laſt aſſembly ever convened in that province on the principles of their former charter, admiral Graves arrived in Boſton, with ſeveral ſhips of the line and a number of tranſports laden with troops, military ſtores, and all warlike accoutrements. The troops landed peaceably, took poſſeſſion of the open grounds, and formed ſeveral encampments within the town.

At the ſame time arrived the bill for new modelling the government of the Maſſachuſetts. By this bill their former charter was entirely vacated: a council of thirty-ſix members was appointed by *mandamus*, to hold their places during the king's pleaſure; all judges, juſtices, ſheriffs, &c. were to be appointed by the governor, without the advice of council, and to be removed at his ſole option. Jurors in future were to be named by the ſheriff, inſtead of the uſual and more impartial mode of drawing them by lot. All town-meetings without expreſs leave from the governor were forbidden, except thoſe annually held in the ſpring for the

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choice of repreſentatives and town-officers. Several other violations of the former compact completed the ſyſtem.

This new mode of government, though it had been for ſome time expected, occaſioned ſuch loud complaints, ſuch univerſal murmurs, that ſeveral of the newly appointed counſellors had not the courage to accept places which they were ſenſible would reflect diſgrace on their memory. Two of them* ſeemed really to decline from principle, and publickly declared they would have no hand in the dereliction of the rights of their country. Several others relinquiſhed their ſeats for fear of offending their countrymen; but moſt of them, ſelected by Mr. Hutchinſon as proper inſtruments for the purpoſe, were deſtitute of all ideas of public virtue. They readily took the qualifying oaths, and engaged to lend their hand to eraſe the laſt veſtige of freedom in that devoted province.

The people ſtill firm and undaunted, aſſembled in multitudes and repaired to the houſes of the obnoxious counſellors. They demanded an immediate reſignation of their unconſtitutional appointments, and a ſolemn aſſurance that they would never accept any office incompatible with the former privileges enjoyed by their country. Some of them terrified by the

* Theſe were James Ruſſell, Eſq. of Charleſtown, and William Vaſſal, Eſq. of Boſton.

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reſolution of the people complied, and remained afterwards quiet and unmoleſted in their own houſes. Others, who had proſtrated all principle in the hope of preferment, and were hardy enough to go every length to ſecure it, conſcious of the guilty part they had acted, made their eſcape into Boſton where they were ſure of the protection of the king's troops. Indeed that unhappy town ſoon became the receptacle of all the devotees to miniſterial meaſures from every part of the province: they there conſoled themſelves with the barbarous hope, that parliament would take the ſevereſt meaſures to enforce their own acts; nor were theſe hopes unfounded.

It has been obſerved that by the late edict for the *better adminiſtration* of *juſtice* in the *Maſſachuſetts*, any man was liable on the ſlighteſt *ſuſpicion* of *treaſon*, or *miſpriſion* of *treaſon*, to be dragged from his own family or vicinity, to any part of the king of England's dominions for trial. It was now reported that general Gage had orders to arreſt the leading characters in oppoſition, and tranſport them beyond ſea, and that a reinforcement of troops might be hourly expected ſufficient to enable him to execute all the mad projects of a raſh and unprincipled miniſtry.

Though the operation of this ſyſtem in its utmoſt latitude was daily threatened and ex-

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pected, it made little impreſſion on a people determined to withhold even a tacit conſent to any infractions on their charter. They conſidered the preſent meaſures as a breach of a ſolemn covenant, which at the ſame time that it ſubjected them to the authority of the king of England, ſtipulated to them the equal enjoyment of all the rights and privileges of free and natural born ſubjects. They choſe to hazard the conſequences of returning back to a ſtate of nature, rather than quietly ſubmit to unjuſt and arbitrary meaſures continually accumulating. This was a dangerous experiment, though they were ſenſible that the neceſſities of man will ſoon reſtore order and ſubordination, even from confuſion and anarchy: on the contrary, the yoke of deſpotiſm once rivetted, no human ſagacity can juſtly calculate its termination.

While matters hung in this ſuſpenſe, the people in all the ſhire towns collected in prodigious numbers to prevent the ſitting of the courts of common law; forbidding the juſtices to meet, or the jurors to empannel, and obliging all civil magiſtrates to bind themſelves by oath, not to conform to the late acts of parliament in any judiciary proceedings; and all military officers were called upon to reſign their commiſſions. Thus were the bands of ſociety relaxed, law ſet at defiance, and government unhinged throughout the province. Perhaps this may be

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marked in the annals of time, as one of the moſt extraordinary eras in the hiſtory of man: the exertions of ſpirit awakened by the ſevere hand of power had led to that moſt alarming experiment of levelling all ranks, and deſtroying all ſubordination.

It cannot be denied that nothing is more difficult than to reſtrain the provoked multitude, when once arouſed by a ſenſe of wrong, from that ſupineneſs which generally overſpreads the common claſs of mankind. Ignorant and fierce, they know not in the firſt ebullitions of reſentment, how to repel with ſafety the arm of the oppreſſor. It is a work of time to eſtabliſh a regular oppoſition to long eſtabliſhed tyranny. A celebrated writer has obſerved, that "men bear with the defects in "their police, as they do with their inconve-"niences and hardſhips in living:" and perhaps the facility of the human mind in adapting itſelf to its circumſtances, was never more remarkably exemplified, than it was at this time in America.

Trade had long been embarraſſed throughout the colonies by the reſtraints of parliament and the rapacity of revenue officers; the ſhutting up the port of Boſton was felt in every villa of the New England colonies; the bill for altering the conſtitution of Maſſachuſetts, prevented all

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legiſlative proceedings; the executive officers were rendered incapable of acting in their ſeveral departments, and the courts of juſtice ſhut up. It muſt be aſcribed to the virtue of the people, however reluctant ſome may be to acknowledge this truth, that they did not feel the effects of anarchy in the extreme.

But a general forbearance and complacency ſeemed for a time almoſt to preclude the neceſſity of legal reſtraint; and except in a few inſtances, when the indiſcretion of individuals provoked abuſe, there was leſs violence and perſonal inſult than perhaps ever was known in the ſame period of time, when all political union was broken down, and private affection weakened, by the virulence of party prejudice, which generally cuts in ſunder the bands of ſocial and friendly connexion. The people irritated in the higheſt degree, the ſword ſeemed to be half drawn from the ſcabbard, while the trembling hand appeared unwilling to diſplay its whetted point; and all America, as well as the Maſſachuſetts, ſuſpended all partial oppoſition, and waited in anxious hope and expectation the deciſions of a continental congreſs.

This reſpected aſſembly, the *Amphyctions* of the weſtern world, convened by the free ſuffrages of twelve colonies, met at the time propoſed, on the fourth of September, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-four. They

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entered on buſineſs with hearts warmed with the love of their country, a ſenſe of the common and equal rights of man, and the dignity of human nature. Peyton Randolph, Eſq. a gentleman from Virginia, whoſe ſobriety, integrity, and political abilities, qualified him for the important ſtation, was unanimouſly choſen to preſide in this grand council of American peers.

Though this body was ſenſibly affected by the many injuries received from the parent ſtate, their firſt wiſh was a reconciliation on terms of reciprocity, juſtice and honor. In conſequence of theſe ſentiments they cautiouſly avoided, as far as was conſiſtent with the duty due to their conſtituents, every thing that might tend to widen the breach between Great-Britain and the colonies. Yet they were determined, if parliament continued deaf to the calls of juſtice, not to ſubmit to the yoke of tyranny, but to take the preparatory ſteps neceſſary for a vigorous reſiſtance.

After a thorough diſcuſſion of the civil, political, and commercial intereſts of both countries, the natural ties, and the mutual benefits reſulting from the ſtricteſt amity, and the unhappy conſequences that muſt enſue, if driven to the laſt appeal, they reſolved on a dutiful and loyal petition to the king, recapitulating their grievances, and imploring redreſs: they

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modeſtly remonſtrated, and obliquely cenſured the authors of thoſe miſchiefs, which filled all America with complaint. CHAP. V. 1774.

They drew up an affectionate, but ſpirited memorial to the people of England, reminding them that they held their own boaſted liberties on a precarious tenure, if government, under the ſanction of parliamentary authority, might enforce by the terrors of the ſword their unconſtitutional edicts. They informed them, that they determined, from a ſenſe of juſtice to poſterity, and for the honor of human nature, to reſiſt all infringements on the natural rights of men; that, if neither the dictates of equity, nor the ſuggeſtions of humanity, were powerful enough to reſtrain a *wanton* adminiſtration from ſhedding blood in a cauſe ſo derogatory to the principles of *juſtice*, not all the exertions of ſuperior ſtrength ſhould lead them to ſubmit ſervilely to the impoſitions of a foreign power. They forwarded a well-adapted addreſs to the French inhabitants of Canada, to which they ſubjoined a detail of their rights, with obſervations on the alarming aſpect of the late Quebec bill, and invited them to join in the common cauſe of America.

Energy and preciſion, political ability, and the genuine *amor patriæ*, marked the meaſures of the ſhort ſeſſion of this congreſs. They concluded their proceedings with an addreſs to the

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ſeveral American colonies, exhorting them to union and perſeverance in the modes of oppoſition they had pointed out. Among the moſt important of theſe was a ſtrong recommendation to diſcontinue all commerce with Great Britain, and encourage the improvement of arts and manufactures among themſelves. They exhorted all ranks and orders of men to a ſtrict adherence to induſtry, frugality, and ſobriety of manners; and to look primarily to the ſupreme Ruler of the univerſe, who is able to defeat the crafty deſigns of the moſt potent enemy. They agreed on a declaration of rights, and entered into an aſſociation, to which the ſignature of every member of congreſs was affixed;* in which they bound themſelves to ſuſpend all farther intercourſe with Great Britain, to import no merchandize from that hoſtile country, to abſtain from the uſe of all India teas; and that after a limited time, if a radical redreſs of grievances was not obtained, no American produce ſhould be exported either to England or the Weſt India iſlands under the juriſdiction of Britain.

To theſe recommendations were added ſeveral ſumptuary reſolves; after which they adviſed their conſtituents to a new choice of delegates, to meet in congreſs on the tenth of May, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-five: they

* See Appendix, No. X.

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judged it probable that, by that time, they ſhould hear the ſucceſs of their petitions to the throne. They then prudently diſſolved themſelves, and returned to their private occupations in their ſeveral provinces, there to wait the operation of their reſolutions and addreſſes.

It is ſcarcely poſſible to deſcribe the influence of the tranſactions and reſolves of congreſs on the generality of the people throughout the wide extended continent of America. Hiſtory records no injunctions of men, that were ever more religiouſly obſerved; or any human laws more readily and univerſally obeyed, than were the recommendations of this revered body. It is indeed a ſingular phenomenon in the ſtory of human conduct, that when all legal inſtitutions were aboliſhed, and long eſtabliſhed governments at once annihilated in ſo many diſtinct ſtates, that the recommendations of committees and conventions, not enforced by penal ſanctions, ſhould be equally influential and binding with the ſevereſt code of law, backed by royal authority, and ſtrengthened by the murdering ſword of deſpotiſm. Doubtleſs the fear of popular reſentment operated on ſome, with a force equal to the rod of the magiſtrate: the ſingular puniſhments,* inflicted in ſome inſtances by an inflamed rabble, on a few who en-

* Such as tarring and feathering, &c.

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deavored to counteract the public meaſures, deterred others from openly violating the public reſolves, and acting againſt the general conſent of the people.

Not the bittereſt foe to American freedom, whatever might be his wiſhes, preſumed to counteract the general voice by an avowed importation of a ſingle article of Britiſh merchandize, after the firſt day of February, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-five. The cargoes of all veſſels that happened to arrive after this limited period were punctually delivered to the committees of correſpondence, in the firſt port of their arrival, and ſold at public auction. The prime coſt and charges, and the half of one per cent. was paid to the owners, and the ſurplus of the profits was appropriated to the relief of the diſtreſſed inhabitants of Boſton, agreeable to the ſeventh article in the aſſociation of the continental congreſs.

The voice of the multitude is as the ruſhing down of a torrent, nor is it ſtrange that ſome outrages were committed againſt a few obſtinate and imprudent partizans of the court, by perſons of as little conſideration as themſelves. It is true that in the courſe of the arduous ſtruggle, there were many irregularities that could not be juſtified, and ſome violences in conſequence of the general diſcontent, that will

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not ſtand the teſt, when examined at the bar of equity; yet perhaps fewer than ever took place in any country under ſimilar circumſtances. Witneſs the convulſions of Rome on the demolition of her firſt race of kings; the inſurrections and commotions of her colonies before the downfal of the commonwealth; and to come nearer home, the confuſions, the mobs, the cruelties in Britain in their civil convulſions, from William the conqueror to the days of the Stuarts, and from the arbitrary Stuarts to the riots of London and Liverpool, even in the reign of George the third.

Many other inſtances of the dread effects of popular commotion, when wrought up to reſiſtance by the oppreſſive hand of power, might be adduced from the hiſtory of nations,* and the

* France might have been mentioned, as a remarkable inſtance of the truth of theſe obſervations, had they not been written ſeveral years before the extraordinary revolutions and cruel convulſions, that have ſince agitated that unhappy country. Every one will obſerve the aſtoniſhing difference in the conduct of the people of America and of France, in the two revolutions which took place within a few years of each other. In the one, all was horror, robbery, aſſaſſination, murder, devaſtation and maſſacre; in the other, a general ſenſe of rectitude checked the commiſſion of thoſe crimes, and the dread of ſpilling human blood withheld for a time the hand of party, even when the paſſions were irritated to the extreme. This muſt be attributed to the different religion, government, laws and manners of the two countries, previous to theſe great

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ferocity of human nature, when not governed by intereſt or fear. Conſidering the right of perſonal liberty, which every one juſtly claims, the tenacious regard to property, and the pride of opinion, which ſometimes operates to the diſſolution of the tendereſt ties of nature, it is wonderful, when the mind was elevated by theſe powerful ſprings, and the paſſions whetted by oppoſition or inſult, that riot and confuſion, deſolation and bloodſhed, was not the fatal conſequence of the long interregnum of law and government throughout the colonies. Yet not a life was loſt till the trump of war ſummoned all parties to the field.

Valor is an inſtinct that appears even among ſavages, as a dictate of nature planted for ſelf-defence; but patriotiſm on the diffuſive principles of general benevolence, is the child of ſociety. This virtue with the fair acompliſhments of ſcience, gradually grows and increaſes with civilization, until refinement is wrought to a height that poiſons and corrupts the mind. This appears when the accumulation of wealth is rapid, and the gratifications of luxurious appetite become eaſy; the ſeeds of benevolence are then often deſtroyed, and the *man* reverts

events; not to any difference in the nature of man; in ſimilar circumſtances, revenge, cruelty, confuſion, and every evil work, operate equally on the ungoverned paſſions of men in all nations.

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back to ſelfiſh barbariſm, and feels no check to his rapacity and boundleſs ambition, though his paſſions may be frequently veiled under various alluring and deceptive appearances. CHAP. V. 1774.

America was now a fair field for a tranſcript of all the virtues and vices that have illumined or darkened, diſgraced and reigned triumphant in their turn over all the other quarters of the habitable globe. The progreſs of every thing had there been remarkably rapid, from the firſt ſettlement of the country. Learning was cultivated, knowledge diſſeminated, politeneſs and morals improved, and valor and patriotiſm cheriſhed, in proportion to the rapidity of her population. This extraordinary cultivation of arts and manners may be accounted for, from the ſtage of ſociety and improvement in which the firſt planters of America were educated before they left their native clime. The firſt emigrations to North America were not compoſed of a ſtrolling banditti of rude nations, like the firſt people of moſt other colonies in the hiſtory of the world. The early ſettlers in the newly diſcovered continent were as far advanced in civilization, policy, and manners; in their ideas of government, the nature of compacts, and the bands of civil union, as any of their neighbors at that period among the moſt poliſhed nations of Europe. Thus they ſoon grew to maturity, and became able to vie with their European anceſtors in arts, in arms, in perſpi-

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cuity in the cabinet, courage in the field, and ability for foreign negociations, in the ſame ſpace of time that moſt other colonies have required to pare off the ruggedneſs of their native ferocity, eſtabliſh the rudiments of civil ſociety, and begin the fabric of government and juriſprudence. Yet as they were not fully ſenſible of their own ſtrength and abilities, they wiſhed ſtill to hang upon the arm, and look up for protection to their original parent.

The united voice of millions ſtill acknowledged the ſceptre of Brunſwick; firmly attached to the houſe of Hanover, educated in the principles of monarchy, and fond of that mode of government under certain limitations, they were ſtill petitioning the king of England only to be reſtored to the ſame footing of privilege claimed by his other ſubjects, and wiſhed ardently to keep the way open to a reunion, conſiſtent with their ideas of honor and freedom.

Thus the grand council of the union were diſpoſed to wait the operations of time, without hurrying to momentous deciſions that might in a degree have ſanctioned ſeverities in the parent ſtate that would have ſhut up every avenue to reconciliation. While the repreſentatives of all the provinces had thus been deliberating, the individual colonies were far from being idle. Provincial congreſſes and conven-

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tions had in almoſt every province taken place of the old forms of legiſlation and government, and they were all equally induſtrious and united in the ſame modes to combat the intrigues of the governmental faction, which equally infeſted the whole, though the eaſtern borders of the continent more immediately ſuffered. But their inſtitutions in infancy, commerce ſuſpended, and their property ſeized; threatened by the national orators, by the proud chieftains of military departments, and by the Britiſh fleet and army daily augmenting, hoſtilities of the moſt ſerious nature lowered on all ſides; the artillery of war and the fire of rhetoric ſeemed to combine for the deſtruction of America.

The minds of the people at this period, though not diſmayed, were generally ſolemnized, in expectation of events, deciſive both to political and private happineſs, and every brow appeared expreſſive of ſober anxiety. The people trembled for their liberties, the merchant for his intereſt, the tories for their places, the whigs for their country, and the virtuous for the manners of ſociety.

It muſt be allowed that the genius of America was bold, reſolute and enterpriſing; tenacious of the rights their fathers had endured ſuch hardſhips to purchaſe, they determined to defend to the laſt breath the invaluable poſſeſſion. To check this ardent characteriſtic it

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had, previous to the time we are upon, been conſidered, as if by common conſent among the plantation governors, a ſtroke of policy to depreſs the militia of the country. All military diſcipline had for ſeveral years been totally neglected; thus untrained to arms, whenever there had been an occaſional call in aid of Britiſh operations in America, the militia were conſidered as a ruſtic ſet of auxiliaries, and employed not only in the leaſt honorable, but the moſt menial ſervices. Though this indignity was felt, it was never properly reſented; they had borne the burthen of fatigue and ſubordination without much complaint: but the martial ſpirit of the country now became conſpicuous, and the inclination of the youth of every claſs was univerſally cheriſhed, and military evolutions were the interludes that moſt delighted even children in the intermiſſion of their ſedentary exerciſes at ſchool.

Among the manœuvres of this period of expectation, a certain quota of hardy youth were drawn from the train-bands in every town, who were ſtyled *minute men.* They voluntarily devoted a daily portion of their time to improve themſelves in the military art, under officers of their own choice. Thus when hoſtilities commenced, every diſtrict could furniſh a number of ſoldiers, who wanted nothing but experience in the operations of war, to make them a match for any troops the ſovereign of Britain could boaſt.

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This military ardor wore an unpleaſant aſpect in the eyes of adminiſtration. By a letter from lord Dartmouth to general Gage, ſoon after he was appointed governor of the Maſſachuſetts, it appeared that a project for diſarming certain provinces was ſeriouſly contemplated in the cabinet.* The parliament actually prohibited the exportation of arms, ammunition and military ſtores to any part of America, except for their own fleets and armies employed in the colonies; and the king's troops were frequently ſent out in ſmall parties to diſmantle the forts, and ſeize the powder magazines or other military ſtores wherever they could be found. The people throughout the colonies with better ſucceſs, took ſimilar meaſures to ſecure to themſelves whatever warlike ſtores were already in the country. Thus a kind of predatory ſtruggle almoſt univerſally took place; every appearance of hoſtilities was diſcoverable in the occaſional rencontres, except the drawing of blood, which was for a time ſuſpended; delayed on one ſide from an apprehenſion that they were not quite ripe for the conflict; on the other, from an expectation of reinforce-

* General Gage in his reply to the miniſter upon the above ſuggeſtion, obſerves, "Your lordſhip's idea of "diſarming certain provinces, would doubtleſs be conſiſt-"ent with prudence and ſafety; but it neither is, nor has "been practicable, without having recourſe to *force*: we "muſt firſt become maſters of the country."

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ments that might enſure victory on the eaſieſt terms; and perhaps by both, from the recollection of former connexion and attachment.

A diſunion of the colonies had long been zealouſly wiſhed for, and vainly attempted by adminiſtration; as that could not be effected, it was deemed a wiſe and politic meaſure, to make an example of one they judged the moſt refractory. Thus reſentment ſeemed particularly levelled at the Maſſachuſetts; conſequently they obliged that colony firſt to meaſure the ſword with the hardy veterans of Britain.

The ſpirited proceedings of the county of Suffolk, ſoon after the arrival of governor Gage, and his haſty diſſolution of the general aſſembly, in ſome meaſure damped the expectation of the miniſtry, who had flattered themſelves that the depreſſion and ruin of the Maſſachuſetts would ſtrike terror through the other provinces, and render the work of conqueſt more eaſy. But the deciſion and energy of this convention, compoſed of members from the principal towns in the county, diſcovered that the ſpirit of Americans at that time was not to be coerced by dragoons; and that if one colony, under the immediate frowns of government, with an army in their capital, were thus bold and determined, new calculations muſt be made for the ſubjugation of all.

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The convention met in Suffolk, at once unanimouſly renounced the authority of the new legiſlature, and engaged to bear harmleſs all officers who ſhould refuſe to act under it. They pronounced all thoſe, who had accepted ſeats at the board of council by mandamus, the incorrigible enemies of their country. They recommended to the people to perfect themſelves in the art of war, and to prepare to reſiſt by force of arms, every hoſtile invaſion. They reſolved, that if any perſon ſhould be apprehended for his exertions in the public cauſe, repriſals ſhould be made, by ſeizing and holding in cuſtody the principal officers of the crown, wherever they could be found, until ample juſtice ſhould be done. They adviſed the collectors and receivers of all public monies, to hold it in their hands, till appropriations ſhould be directed by authority of a provincial congreſs. They earneſtly urged an immediate choice of delegates for that purpoſe, and recommended their convening at Salem.

Theſe and ſeveral other reſolves in the ſame ſtyle and manner, were conſidered by government as the moſt overt acts of *treaſon* that had yet taken place; but their doings were but a ſpecimen of the ſpirit which actuated the whole province. Every town, with the utmoſt alacrity, choſe one or more of the moſt reſpectable gentlemen, to meet in provincial congreſs,

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agreeable to the recommendation on the fifteenth of October, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-four. They were requeſted by their conſtituents, to take into conſideration the diſtreſſed ſtate of the country, and to deviſe the moſt practicable meaſures to extricate the people from their preſent perplexed ſituation.

In the mean time, to preclude the appearance of neceſſity for ſuch a convention, governor Gage iſſued precepts, ſummoning a new general aſſembly to meet at Salem, the week preceding the time appointed for the meeting of the convention. The people obeyed the order of the governor, and every where choſe their repreſentatives; but they all choſe the ſame perſons they had recently delegated to meet in convention. Whether the governor was apprehenſive that it would not be ſafe for his mandamus council to venture out of the capital, or whether conſcious that it would not be a conſtitutional aſſembly, or from the imbecility of his own mind, in a ſituation altogether new to him, is uncertain; but from whatever cauſe it aroſe, he diſcovered his embarraſſment by a proclamation, dated the day before he was to meet them at Salem, to diſſolve the new houſe of repreſentatives. This extraordinary diſſolution only precipitated the pre-determination of the delegates; they had taken their line of conduct, and their determinations were not eaſily ſhaken.

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[redacted]oſen by the houſe on the day [redacted]on had alſo, as requeſted, re[redacted] to Saleſh. The deſign was, to proceed [redacted]ſineſs as uſual, without any notice of the [redacted]lation of their charter. Their determi[redacted] was, if the governor refuſed to meet [redacted] or countenance them, to conſider him as [redacted] from the province. It had been uſual [redacted] the old charter, when the governor's [redacted] could not be obtained, by reaſon of [redacted], or abſence, that by the names of fifteen [redacted]ers affixed thereto, all the acts of [redacted] were equally valid, as when ſigned by [redacted] governor. But by the extraordinary con[redacted] of the chief magiſtrate, the general aſſem[redacted] left at liberty to complete meaſures in [redacted]de or form that appeared moſt expe[redacted] Accordingly they adjourned to Concord, [redacted] ſituated about thirty miles from Salem, [redacted] there proſecuted the buſineſs of their con[redacted]ts.

As it was not yet thought prudent to aſſume [redacted] the powers of an organized government, [redacted]hoſe a preſident, and acted as a provincial [redacted]ſs, as previouſly propoſed. They recom[redacted]d to the militia to chooſe their own [redacted], and ſubmit to regular diſcipline at [redacted] thrice a week, and that a fourth part of [redacted]em ſhould be draughted, and hold themſelves [redacted] readineſs to march at a moment's warning to any part of the province. They recom-

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mended to the ſeveral coun[redacted] adhere to their own reſolves, and to [redacted] courts of common law ſhut till ſome future period, when juſtice could be legally adminiſtered. They appointed a committee of ſupplies to provide ammunition, proviſions, and warlike ſtores, and to depoſite them in ſome place of ſafety, ready for uſe, if they ſhould be obliged to take up arms in defence of their rights.

This buſineſs required talents and energy to make arrangements for exigencies, new and untried. Fortunately Elbridge Gerry, Eſq. was placed at the head of this commiſſion, who executed it with his uſual punctuality and indefatigable induſtry. This gentleman entered from principle, early in the oppoſition to Britiſh encroachments, and continued one of the moſt uniform republicans to the end of the conteſt. He was the next year choſen a delegate to the continental congreſs. Firm, exact, perſpicuous, and tenacious of public and private honor, he rendered eſſential ſervice to the union for many years that he continued a member of that honorable body.*

* Mr. Gerry's ſervices and exertions to promote the public intereſt through every important ſtation which he filled, from this period until he was appointed to negociate with the republic of France in the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-eight, were uniform. There his indefatigable zeal, his penetration, and cool perſeverance, when every thing appeared on the eve of a rupture between

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The provincial congreſs appointed a committee of ſafety, conſiſting of nine members, and veſted them with powers to act as they ſhould ſee fit for the public ſervice, in the receſs, and to call them together again, on any extraordinary emergence; and before they ſeparated, they choſe a new ſet of delegates, to meet in general congreſs the enſuing ſpring. After this they held a conference with the committees of donation and correſpondence, and the ſelectmen of the town of Boſton, on the expediency of an effort to remove the inhabitants from a town blockaded on all ſides. They then ſeparated for a few weeks, to exert their influence in aid to the reſolutions of the people; to ſtrengthen their fortitude, and prepare them for the approaching ſtorm, which they were ſenſible could be at no great diſtance.

Though the inhabitants of Boſton were ſhut up in garriſon, inſulted by the troops, and in many reſpects felt the evils of a ſevere military government; yet the difficulty of removing thouſands from their reſidence in the capital, to ſeek an aſylum in the country on the eve of winter, appeared fraught with inconveniencies too great to be attempted; they were of conſequence, the moſt of them obliged to continue

the two republics, laid the foundation and formed the outlines of an accommodation, which ſoon after terminated in an amicable treaty between France and the United States of America.

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The principal inhabitants of the town, though more immediately under the eye of their oppreſſors, loſt no part of their determined ſpirit, but ſtill acted in uniſon with their friends more at liberty without the city. A bold inſtance of this appeared, when Mr. Oliver, the chief juſtice, regardleſs of the impeachment that lay againſt him, attempted with his aſſociates to open the ſuperior court, and tranſact buſineſs according to the new regulations. Advertiſements were poſted in ſeveral public places, forbidding on their peril, the attornies and barriſters at law, to carry any cauſe up to the bar. Both the grand and petit-jurors refuſed attendance, and finally the court was obliged to adjourn without day.

Theſe circumſtances greatly alarmed the party, more eſpecially thoſe natives of the country who had taken ſanctuary under the banners of an officer, who had orders to enforce the acts of adminiſtration, even at the point of the bayonet. Apprehenſive they might be dragged from their aſylum within the gates, they were continually urging general Gage to more vigorous meaſures without. They aſſured him, that it would be eaſy for him to execute the deſigns of government, provided he would by law-martial ſeize, try, or tranſport

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to England, such persons as were most particularly obnoxious; and that if the people once saw him thus determined, they would sacrifice their leaders and submit quietly.

They associated, and bound themselves by covenant, to go all lengths in support of the projects of administration against their country; but the general, assured of reinforcements in the spring, sufficient to enable him to open a bloody campaign, and not remarkable for resolution or activity, had not the courage, and perhaps not the inclination, to try the dangerous experiment, till he felt himself stronger. He was also sensible of the striking similarity of genius, manners, and conduct of the colonies in union. It was observable to every one, that local prejudices, either in religion or government, taste or politics, were suspended, and that every distinction was sunk, in the consideration of the necessity of connexion and vigor in one general system of defence. He therefore proceeded no farther, during the winter, than publishing proclamations against congresses, committees, and conventions, styling all associations of the kind unlawful and treasonable combinations, and forbidding all persons to pay the smallest regard to their recommendations, on penalty of his majesty's severest displeasure.

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Theſe feeble exertions only confirmed the people in their adherence to the modes pointed out by thoſe, to whom they had intruſted the ſafety of the commonwealth. The only active movement of the ſeaſon was that of a party commanded by colonel Leſlie, who departed from Caſtle William on the evening of Saturday, February twenty-ſeventh, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-five, on a ſecret expedition to Salem. The deſign was principally to ſeize a few cannon on the enſuing morning. The people apprized of his approach, drew up a bridge over which his troops were to paſs. Leſlie, finding his paſſage would be diſputed, and having no orders to proceed to blows, after much expoſtulation engaged, that if he might be permitted to go on the ground, he would moleſt neither public nor private property. The bridge was immediately let down, and through a line of armed inhabitants, ready to take vengeance on a forfeiture of his word, he only marched to the extreme part of the town, and then returned to Boſton, to the mortification of himſelf and of his friends, that an officer of colonel Leſlie's acknowledged bravery ſhould be ſent out on ſo frivolous an errand.

This incident diſcovered the determination of the Americans, carefully to avoid every thing that had the appearance of beginning hoſtilities on their part; an imputation that

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might have been attended with great inconvenience; nor indeed were they prepared to precipitate a conflict, the conſequences and the termination of which no human calculation could reach. This manœuvre alſo diſcovered that the people of the country were not deficient in point of courage, but that they ſtood charged for a reſiſtance, that might ſmite the ſceptred hand, whenever it ſhould be ſtretched forth to arreſt by force the inheritance purchaſed by the blood of anceſtors, whoſe ſelf-denying virtues had rivalled the admired heroes of antiquity.

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CHAPTER VI.

Parliamentary Diviſions on American Affairs—curſory Obſervations and Events.—Meaſures for raiſing an Army of Obſervation by the four New England Governments of New Hampſhire, Maſſachuſetts, Rhode Iſland, and Connecticut.—Battle of Lexington.—Sketches of the Conduct and Characters of the Governors of the ſouthern Provinces.—Ticonderoga taken.—Arrival of Reinforcements from England.—Proſcription and Characters of Samuel Adams and John Hancock, Eſquires.—Battle of Bunker-Hill.—Death and Character of General Joſeph Warren.—Maſſachuſetts adopt a ſtable Form of Government.

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WE have ſeen ſeveral years paſs off in doubtful anxiety, in repreſſion and repulſion, while many yet indulged the pleaſing hope, that ſome able genius might ariſe, that would deviſe meaſures to heal the breach, to revive the languiſhing commerce of both countries, and reſtore the bleſſings of peace, by removing the cauſes of complaint. But theſe hopes evaniſhed, and all expectations of that kind were ſoon cut off, by the determined ſyſtem of coercion in Britain, and the actual commencement of *war* in *America*.

The earlieſt accounts from England, after the beginning of the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-five, announced the ferments of the Britiſh nation, principally on account of American meaſures, the perſeverance of the

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miniſtry, and the obſtinacy of the king, in ſupport of the ſyſtem ;—the ſudden diſſolution of one parliament, and the immediate election of another, compoſed of the ſame members, or men of the ſame principles as the former.

Adminiſtration had triumphed through the late parliament over reaſon, juſtice, the humanity of individuals, and the intereſt of the nation. Notwithſtanding the noble and ſpirited oppoſition of ſeveral diſtinguiſhed characters in both houſes, it ſoon appeared that the influence of the miniſtry over the old parliament was not depreciated, or that more lenient principles pervaded the councils of the new one. Nor did more judicious and favorable deciſions lead to the proſpect of an equitable adjuſtment of a diſpute that had intereſted the feelings of the whole empire, and excited the attention of neighboring nations, not as an object of curioſity, but with views and expectations that might give a new face to the political and commercial ſyſtems of a conſiderable part of the European world.

The petition of the continental congreſs to the king, their addreſs to the people of England, with general Gage's letters, and all papers relative to America, were introduced early in the ſeſſion of the new parliament. Warm debates enſued, and the cauſe of the colonies was advocated with ability and energy by the

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moſt admired orators among the commons, and by ſeveral very illuſtrious names in the houſe of lords. They deſcanted largely on the injuſtice and impolicy of the preſent ſyſtem, and the impracticability of its execution. They urged that the immediate repeal of the revenue acts, the recal of the troops, and the opening the port of Boſton, were neceſſary, preliminary ſteps to any hope of reconciliation; and that theſe meaſures only would preſerve the empire from conſequences that would be fatal to her intereſts, as well as diſgraceful to her councils. But, pre-determined in the cabinet, a large majority in parliament appeared in favor of ſtrong meaſures. The miniſterial party inſiſted that coercion only could enſure obedience, reſtore tranquillity to the colonies, repair the inſulted dignity, and re-eſtabliſh the ſupremacy of parliament.

An act was immediately paſſed, prohibiting New Hampſhire, Maſſachuſetts, Rhode Iſland, and Connecticut from carrying on the fiſhing buſineſs on the banks of Newfoundland. By this arbitrary ſtep, thouſands of miſerable families were ſuddenly cut off from all means of ſubſiſtence. But, as if determined the rigors of power ſhould know no bounds, before parliament had time to cool, after the animoſities occaſioned by the bill juſt mentioned, another* was introduced by the

* Parliamentary proceedings in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-five.

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miniſter, whereby the trade of the ſouthern colonies was reſtrained, and in future confined entirely to Great Britain. The minority ſtill perſevered in the moſt decided oppoſition both againſt the former and the preſent modes of ſeverity towards the colonies. Very ſenſible and ſpirited proteſts were entered againſt the new bills, ſigned by ſome of the firſt nobility. A young nobleman of high rank and reputation predicted, that "meaſures commenced in "iniquity, and purſued in reſentment, muſt "end in blood, and involve the nation in im-"mediate civil war."* It was replied, that the colonies were already in a ſtate of rebellion; that the ſupremacy of parliament muſt not even be queſtioned; and that compulſory meaſures muſt be purſued from abſolute neceſſity. Neither reaſon nor argument, humanity or policy, made the ſmalleſt impreſſion on thoſe determined to ſupport all deſpotic proceedings. Thus after much altercation, a majority of two hundred and eighty-two appeared in favor of augmenting the forces in America, both by ſea and land, againſt only ſeventy in the houſe of commons, who oppoſed the meaſure.

All ideas of courage or ability in the coloniſts to face the dragoons and reſiſt the power of Britain, were treated with the greateſt deriſion,

* Debates in parliament, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-five.

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and particularly ridiculed by a general officer,* then in the houſe, who ſoon after delivered his ſtandards, and ſaw the ſurrender of a capital army under his command, to thoſe undiſciplined Americans he had affected to hold in ſo much contempt. The firſt lord of the admiralty alſo declared, "the Americans were neither diſ-"ciplined, nor capable of diſcipline."

Several ſhips of the line and a number of frigates were immediately ordered to join the ſquadron at Boſton. Ten thouſand men were ordered for the land ſervice, in addition to thoſe already there. A regiment of light-horſe, and a body of troops from Ireland, to complete the number, were directed to embark with all poſſible diſpatch to reinforce general Gage.

The ſpeech from the throne, approving the ſanguinary conduct of the miniſter and the parliament, blaſted all the hopes of the more moderate and humane part of the nation. Several gallant officers of the firſt rank, diſguſted with the policy, and revolting at the idea of butchering their American brethren, reſigned their commiſſions. The earl of Effingham was among the firſt, who, with a frankneſs that his enemies ſtyled a degree of inſanity, aſſured his majeſty, "that though he loved the profeſſion "of a ſoldier, and would with the utmoſt

* General Burgoyne, afterwards captured at Saratoga.

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"cheerfulneſs ſacrifice his fortune and his life "for the ſafety of his majeſty's perſon, and the "dignity of his crown; yet the ſame princi- "ples which inſpired him with thoſe unalter- "able ſentiments of duty and affection, would "not ſuffer him to be inſtrumental in depriv- "ing any part of the people of their liberties, "which to him appeared the beſt ſecurity of "their fidelity and obedience; therefore with- "out the ſevereſt reproaches of conſcience he "could not conſent to bear arms againſt the "Americans."

But there is no age which bears a teſtimony ſo honorable to human nature; as ſhews mankind at ſo ſublime a pitch of virtue, that there are not always enough to be found ready to aid the arm of the oppreſſor, provided they may ſhare in the ſpoils of the oppreſſed. Thus many officers of ability and experience courted the American ſervice as the readieſt road to preferment.

Adminiſtration not ſatisfied with their own ſevere reſtrictions, ſet on foot a treaty with the Dutch and ſeveral other nations, to prevent their aiding the colonies by ſupplying them with any kind of warlike ſtores. Every thing within and without wore the moſt hoſtile appearance, even while the commercial intereſt of Great Britain was cloſely interwoven with that of America; and the treaſures of the colonies,

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which had been continually pouring into the lap of the mother country, in exchange for her manufactures, were ſtill held ready for her uſe, in any advance to harmony.

The boundaries of the king of England's continental domains were almoſt immeaſurable, and the inhabitants were governed by a ſtrong predilection in favor of the nation from whom they derived their origin: hence it is difficult to account on any principles of human policy, for the infatuation that inſtigated to the abſurd project of conquering a country, already their's on the moſt advantageous terms. But the ſeeds of ſeparation were ſown, and the *ball* of empire rolled weſtward with ſuch aſtoniſhing rapidity, that the pious mind is naturally excited to acknowledge a ſuperintending Providence, that led to the period of independence, even before America was conſcious of her maturity. Precipitated into a war, dreadful even in contemplation, humanity recoiled at the idea of civil feuds, and their concomitant evils.

When the news arrived in the colonies that the Britiſh army in Boſton was to be reinforced, that the coercive ſyſtem was at all hazards to be proſecuted, though aſtoniſhed at the perſevering ſeverity of a nation ſtill beloved and revered by Americans, deeply affected with the calamities that threatened the whole empire, and ſhocked at the proſpect of the convulſions and

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the cruelties ever attendant on civil war, yet few balanced on the part they were to act. The alternative held up was a bold and vigorous reſiſtance, or an abject ſubmiſſion to the ignoble terms demanded by adminiſtration. Armed with reſolution and magnanimity, united by affection, and a remarkable conformity of opinion, the whole people through the wide extended continent ſeemed determined to reſiſt in blood, rather than become the ſlaves of arbitrary power.

Happily for America, the inhabitants in general poſſeſſed not only the virtues of native courage and a ſpirit of enterpriſe, but minds generally devoted to the beſt affections. Many of them retained this character to the end of the conflict by the dereliction of intereſt, and the coſtly ſacrifices of health, fortune and life. Perhaps the truth of the obſervation, that "a national force is beſt formed where num-"bers of men are uſed to equality, and where "the meaneſt citizen may conſider himſelf deſ-"tined to command as well as to obey," was never more conſpicuous, than in the brave reſiſtance of Americans to the potent and conquering arm of Great Britain, who, in conjunction with her colonies, had long taught the nations to tremble at her ſtrength.

But the painful period haſtened on, when the connexion which nature and intereſt had long

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maintained between Great Britain and the colonies, muſt be broken off; the ſword drawn, and the ſcabbard thrown down the gulf of time. We muſt now purſue the progreſs of a war enkindled by avarice, whetted by ambition, and blown up into a thirſt for revenge by repeated diſappointment. Not the ſplendor of a diadem, the purple of princes, or the pride of power, can ever ſanction the deeds of cruelty perpetrated on the weſtern ſide of the Atlantic, and not unfrequently by men, whoſe crimes emblazoned by title, will enhance the infamy of their injuſtice and barbariſm, when the tragic tale is faithfully related.

We have already obſerved on the ſupplicatory addreſſes every where offered to the old government, the rebuffs attending them, the obſtruction to legal debate, and the beſt poſſible regulations made by the colonies in their circumſtances, under the new modes eſtabliſhed by themſelves.

The authority of congreſſes and committees of correſpondence, and the ſpirit which pervaded the united colonies in their preparations for war, during the laſt ſix months previous to the commencement of hoſtilities, bore ſuch a reſemblance, that the detail of the tranſactions of one province is an epitome of the ſtory of all.

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The particular reſentment of Great Britain levelled at the Maſſachuſetts, made it neceſſary for that province to act a more decided part, that they might be in ſome readineſs to repel the ſtorm which it appeared probable would firſt burſt upon them. Their provincial congreſs was ſitting when the news firſt arrived, that all hope of reconciliation was precluded by the hoſtile reſolutions of parliament. This rather quickened than retarded the important ſtep, which was then the ſubject of their deliberations. Perſuaded that the unhappy conteſt could not terminate without bloodſhed, they were conſulting on the expediency of raiſing an army of obſervation, from the four New England governments, that they might be prepared for defence in caſe of an attack, before the continental congreſs could again meet, and make proper arrangements for farther operations. They proceeded to name their own commanding officers, and appointed delegates to confer with New Hampſhire, Connecticut, and Rhode Iſland, on the proportion of men they would furniſh, and their quota of expenſe for the equipment of ſuch an armament.

Connecticut and New Hampſhire readily acceded to the propoſal, but in Rhode Iſland ſeveral embarraſſments were thrown in the way, though the people in that colony were in general as ready to enter warmly into meaſures for the common ſafety as any of the others;

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nor had they leſs reaſon. They had long been exaſperated by the inſolence and rapacity of the officers of a part of the navy ſtationed there to watch their trade. Theſe had, without color of right, frequently robbed Newport, and plundered the adjacent iſlands. They had ſeized the little ſkiffs, in which a number of poor people had gained a ſcanty ſubſiſtence; and inſulted, embarraſſed and abuſed the inhabitants in various ways through the preceding year.

It is the nature of man, when he deſpairs of legal reparation for injuries received, to ſeek ſatisfaction by avenging his own wrongs. Thus, ſome time before this period,* a number of men in diſguiſe, had riotouſly aſſembled, and ſet fire to a ſloop of war in the harbour. When they had thus diſcovered their reſentment by this illegal proceeding, they diſperſed without farther violence. For this imputed crime the whole colony had been deemed guilty, and interdicted as acceſſary. A court of inquiry was appointed by his majeſty, veſted with the power of ſeizing any perſon on ſuſpicion, confining him on board a king's ſhip, and ſending him to England for trial. But ſome of the gentlemen named for this inquiſitorial buſineſs, had not the temerity to execute it in the

* See Appendix, Note No. XI. governor Hutchinſon's repreſentation of this affair.

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latitude deſigned; and after ſitting a few days, examining a few perſons, and threatening many, they adjourned to a diſtant day. CHAP. VI. 1775.

The extraordinary precedent of erecting ſuch a court* among them was not forgotten; but there was a conſiderable party in Newport, ſtrongly attached to the royal cauſe. Theſe, headed by their governor, Mr. Wanton, a man of weak capacity, and little political knowledge, endeavoured to impede all meaſures of oppoſition, and to prevent even a diſcuſſion on the propriety of raiſing a defenſive army.

The news of an action at Lexington on the nineteenth of April, between a party of the king's troops and ſome Americans haſtily collected, reached Providence on the ſame evening, a few hours after the gentlemen entruſted with the miſſion for conference with the colony had arrived there; they had not entered on buſineſs, having been in town but an hour or two before this intelligence was received by a ſpecial meſſenger.

On this important information, James Warren, Eſq. the head of the delegation, was of

* The gentlemen who compoſed this court, were Wanton, governor of Rhode Iſland, Horſemanden, chief juſtice of New York, Smith, chief juſtice of New Jerſey, Oliver, chief juſtice of Maſſachuſetts, and Auchmuty, judge of admiralty.

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opinion, that this event not only opened new proſpects and expectations, but that it entirely changed the object of negociation, and that new ground muſt be taken. Their miſſion was by the Maſſachuſetts deſigned merely as a defenſive movement, but he obſerved to the principal inhabitants collected to conſult on the alarming aſpect of preſent affairs, that there now appeared a neceſſity, not only for defenſive but for offenſive operations; he urged his reaſons with ſuch ability and addreſs, that an immediate convention of the aſſembly was obtained. They met at Providence the enſuing day, where, by the trifling of the governor and the indiſcretion of his partizans, the buſineſs labored in the upper houſe for ſeveral days. But the repreſentative branch, impatient of delay, determined to act without any conſideration of their governor, if he continued thus to impede their deſigns, and to unite, by authority of their own body, in vigorous meaſures with their ſiſter colonies. A majority of the council however, at laſt impelled the governor to agree to the determinations of the lower houſe, who had voted a number of men to be raiſed with the utmoſt diſpatch; accordingly a large detachment was ſent forward to the Maſſachuſetts within three days.

When the gentlemen left congreſs for the purpoſe of combining and organizing an army in the eaſtern ſtates, a ſhort adjournment was

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made. Before they ſeparated they ſelected a ſtanding committee to reſide at Concord, where a provincial magazine was kept, and veſted them with power to ſummon congreſs to meet again at a moment's warning, if any extraordinary emergence ſhould ariſe. CHAP. VI. 1775.

In the courſe of the preceding winter, a ſingle regiment at a time had frequently made excurſions from the army at Boſton, and reconnoitred the environs of the town without committing any hoſtilities in the country, except picking up cannon, powder, and warlike ſtores, wherever they could find and ſeize them with impunity. In the ſpring, as they daily expected freſh auxiliaries, they grew more inſolent; from their deportment, there was the higheſt reaſon to expect they would extend their reſearches, and endeavour to ſeize and ſecure, as they termed them, the *factious leaders* of *rebellion*. Yet this was attempted rather ſooner than was generally expected.

On the evening of the eighteenth of April, the grenadiers and light infantry of the army ſtationed at Boſton, embarked under the command of lieutenant colonel Smith, and were ordered to land at Cambridge before the dawn of the enſuing day. This order was executed with ſuch ſecrecy and diſpatch, that the troops reached Lexington, a ſmall village nine miles beyond Cambridge, and began the tragedy of the day juſt as the ſun roſe.

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An advanced guard of officers had been ſent out by land, to ſeize and ſecure all travellers who might be ſuſpected as going forward with intelligence of the hoſtile aſpect of the king's troops. But notwithſtanding this vigilance to prevent notice, a report reached the neighboring towns very early, that a large body of troops, accompanied by ſome of the moſt virulent individuals among the *tories*, who had taken refuge in Boſton, were moving with deſign to deſtroy the provincial magazine at Concord, and take into cuſtody the principal perſons belonging to the committee of ſafety. Few ſuſpected there was a real intention to attack the defenceleſs peaſants of Lexington, or to try the bravery of the ſurrounding villages. But it being reduced to a certainty, that a number of perſons had, the evening before, in the environs of Cambridge, been inſulted, abuſed, and ſtripped, by officers in Britiſh uniform; and that a conſiderable armament might be immediately expected in the vicinity, captain Parker, who commanded a company of militia, ordered them to appear at beat of drum on the parade at Lexington, on the nineteenth. They accordingly obeyed, and were embodied before ſunriſe.

Colonel Smith, who commanded about eight hundred men, came ſuddenly upon them within a few minutes after, and, accoſting them in language very unbecoming an officer of his rank, he ordered them to lay down their arms,

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and diſperſe immediately. He illiberally branded them with the epithets of *rebel* and *traitor*; and before the little party had time, either to reſiſt or to obey, he, with wanton precipitation, ordered his troops to fire. Eight men were killed on the ſpot; and, without any concern for his raſhneſs, or little moleſtation from the inhabitants, Smith proceeded on his rout.

By the time he reached Concord, and had deſtroyed a part of the ſtores depoſited there, the country contiguous appeared in arms, as if determined not to be the tame ſpectators of the outrages committed againſt the perſons, property, and lives of their fellow-citizens. Two or three hundred men aſſembled under the command of colonel Barrett. He ordered them to begin no onſet againſt the troops of their ſovereign, till farther provocation; this order was punctually obeyed. Colonel Smith had ordered a bridge beyond the town to be taken up, to prevent the people on the other ſide from coming to their aſſiſtance. Barrett advanced to take poſſeſſion before the party reached it, and a ſmart ſkirmiſh enſued; ſeveral were killed, and a number wounded on both ſides. Not diſmayed or daunted, this ſmall body of yeomanry, armed in the cauſe of juſtice, and ſtruggling for every thing they held dear, maintained their ſtand until the Britiſh troops, though far ſuperior in numbers, and in all the advan-

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tages of military ſkill, diſcipline, and equipment, gave ground and retreated, without half executing the purpoſe deſigned, by this forced march to Concord.

The adjacent villagers collected, and prepared to cut off their retreat; but a diſpatch had been ſent by colonel Smith to inform general Gage, that the country was arming, and his troops in danger. A battalion under the command of lord Percy was ſent to ſuccour him, and arrived in time to ſave Smith's corps. A ſon of the duke of Northumberland,* previous to this day's work, was viewed by Americans with a favorable eye; though more from a partiality to the father, than from any remarkable perſonal qualities diſcoverable in the ſon. Lord Percy came up with the routed corps near the fields of Menotomy; where barbarities were committed by the king's army, which might have been expected only from a tribe of ſavages. They entered, rifled, plundered, and burnt ſeveral houſes; and in ſome inſtances, the aged and infirm fell under the ſword of the ruffian; women, with their new-born infants, were obliged to fly naked, to eſcape the fury of the flames in which their houſes were enwrapped.

* The duke of Northumberland, father of earl Percy, had been uniformly oppoſed to the late meaſures of adminiſtration, in their American ſyſtem.

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The footſteps of the moſt remorſeleſs nations have ſeldom been marked with more rancorous and ferocious rage, than may be traced in the tranſactions of this day; a day never to be forgotten by Americans. A ſcene like this had never before been exhibited on her peaceful plains; and the manner in which it was executed, will leave an indelible ſtain on a nation, long famed for their courage, humanity, and honor. But they appeared at this period ſo loſt to a ſenſe of dignity, as to be engaged in a cauſe that required perfidy and meanneſs to ſupport it. Yet the impreſſion of juſtice is ſo ſtrongly ſtamped on the boſom of man, that when conſcious the ſword is lifted againſt the rights of equity, it often diſarms the firmeſt heart, and unnerves the moſt valiant arm, when impelled to little ſubterfuges and private cruelties to execute their guilty deſigns.

The affair of Lexington, and the precipitant retreat after the ravages at Menotomy, are teſtimonies of the truth of this obſervation. For, notwithſtanding their ſuperiority in every reſpect, ſeveral regiments of the beſt troops in the royal army, were ſeen, to the ſurpriſe and joy of every lover of his country, flying before the raw, inexperienced peaſantry, who had ran haſtily together in defence of their lives and liberties. Had the militia of Salem and Marblehead have come on, as it was thought they might have done, they would undoubtedly have

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prevented this routed, disappointed army, from reaching the advantageous post of Charlestown. But the tardiness of colonel Pickering, who commanded the Salem regiment, gave them an opportunity to make good their retreat. Whether Mr. Pickering's* delay was owing to timidity, or to a predilection in favor of Britain, remains uncertain; however it was, censure at the time fell very heavily on his character.

Other parts of the country were in motion; but the retreat of the British army was so rapid, that they got under cover of their own ships, and many of them made their escape into Boston. Others, too much exhausted by a quick march and unremitting exercise, without time for refreshment from sunrise to sunset, were unable, both from wounds and fatigue, to cross the river. These were obliged to rest the night, nor were they mistaken in the confidence they placed in the hospitality of the inhabitants of Charlestown; this they reasonably enough expected, both from motives of compassion and fear.

Intimidated by the appearance of such a formidable body of troops within their town, and touched with humanity on seeing the famished condition of the king's officers and soldiers, several of whom, from their wounds and their suf-

* Timothy Pickering, afterwards secretary of state under the presidency of Mr. Adams, by whom he was dismissed from public business.

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ferings, expired before the next morning; the people every where opened their doors, received the diſtreſſed Britons, dreſſed their wounds, and contributed every relief: nothing was neglected that could aſſiſt, refreſh, or comfort the defeated.

The victorious party, ſenſible they could gain little advantage by a farther purſuit, as the Britiſh were within reach of their own ſhips, and at the ſame time under the protection of the town of Charleſtown; they therefore retreated a few miles to take care of their own wounded men, and to refreſh themſelves.

The action at Lexington, detached from its conſequences, was but a trivial *manœuvre* when compared with the records of war and ſlaughter, that have diſgraced the page of hiſtory through all generations of men: but a circumſtantial detail of leſſer events, when antecedent to the convulſions of empire, and national revolution, are not only excuſable, but neceſſary. The provincials loſt in this memorable action, including thoſe who fell, who were not in arms, upwards of fourſcore perſons. It was not eaſy to aſcertain how many of their opponents were loſt, as they endeavoured by all poſſible means to conceal the number, and the diſgrace of the day. By the beſt information, it was judged, including thoſe who died ſoon after of wounds and fatigue, that their loſs was very much great-

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er than that of the Americans. Thus reſentment ſtimulated by recent provocation, the colonies, under all the diſadvantages of an infant country, without diſcipline, without allies, and without reſources, except what they derived from their own valor and virtue, were compelled to reſort to the laſt appeal, the precarious deciſion of the ſword, againſt the mighty power of Britain.

The four New England governments now thought proper to make this laſt appeal, and reſolved to ſtand or fall together. It was a bold and adventurous enterpriſe; but conſcious of the equal privileges beſtowed by Heaven, on all its intelligent creatures on this habitable ball, they did not heſitate on the part they had to act, to retain them. They cheerfully engaged, ſure of the ſupport of the other colonies, as ſoon as congreſs ſhould have time to meet, deliberate, and reſolve. They were very ſenſible, the middle and ſouthern colonies were generally preparing themſelves, with equal induſtry and ability, for a deciſion by arms, whenever hoſtilities ſhould ſeriouſly commence in any part of the continent.

As ſoon as intelligence was ſpread that the firſt blow was ſtruck, and that the ſhrill clarion of war actually reſounded in the capital of the eaſtern ſtates, the whole country roſe in arms. Thouſands collected within twenty-four hours,

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in the vicinity of Boſton; and the colonies of Connecticut, Rhode Iſland, and New Hampſhire ſeemed all to be in motion. Such was the reſentment of the people, and the ardor of enterpriſe, that it was with difficulty they were reſtrained from ruſhing into Boſton, and raſhly involving their friends in common with their enemies, in all the calamities of a town taken by ſtorm.

The day after the battle of Lexington, the congreſs of Maſſachuſetts met at Watertown. They immediately determined on the number of men neceſſary to be kept on the ground, appointed and made eſtabliſhments for the officers of each regiment, agreed on regulations for all military movements, and ſtruck off a currency of paper for the payment of the ſoldiers, making the bills a tender for the payment of debts, to prevent depreciation. They drew up a ſet of judicious rules and orders for the army, to be obſerved by both officers and ſoldiers, until they ſhould be embodied on a larger ſcale, under the general direction of the continental congreſs.

In the mean time, the conſternation of general Gage was equalled by nothing but the rage of his troops, and the diſmay of the *refugees* under his protection. He had known little of the country, and leſs of the diſpoſition and bravery of its inhabitants. He had formed his opinions entirely on the miſrepreſentations of men, who,

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judging from their own feelings more than from the general conduct of mankind, had themselves no idea that the valor of their countrymen could be roused to hazard life and property for the sake of the common weal. Struck with astonishment at the intrepidity of a people he had been led to despise, and stung with vexation at the defeat of some of his best troops, he ordered the gates of the town to be shut, and every avenue guarded, to prevent the inhabitants, whom he now considered as his best security, from making their escape into the country. He had before caused entrenchments to be thrown up across a narrow isthmus, then the only entrance by land: still apprehensive of an attempt to storm the town, he now ordered the environs fortified; and soon made an entrance impracticable, but at too great an expense of blood.

The Bostonians thus unexpectedly made prisoners, and all intercourse with the country, from whence they usually received their daily supplies, cut off; famine stared them in the face on one side, and on the other they beheld the lawless rapine of an enraged enemy, with the sword of vengeance stretched over their heads. Yet, with a firmness worthy of more generous treatment, the principal citizens assembled, and after consultation, determined on a bold and free remonstrance to their military governor. They reminded him of his repeated

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assurances of personal liberty, safety, and protection, if they would not evacuate the town, as they had long been solicited to do by their friends in the country. Had this been seasonably done, the Americans would have reduced the garrison by withholding provisions. The inhabitants of the town now earnestly requested, that the gates might be opened, that none who chose to retire with their wives, families, and property, might be impeded.

Whether moved by feelings of compassion, of which he did not seem to be wholly destitute, or whether it was a premeditated deception, yet remains uncertain; however, general Gage plighted his faith in the strongest terms, that if the inhabitants would deliver up their arms, and suffer them to be deposited in the city hall, they should depart at pleasure, and be assisted by the king's troops in removing their property. His shameful violation of faith in this instance, will leave a stain on the memory of the governor, so long as the obligations of truth are held sacred among mankind.

The insulted people of Boston, after performing the hard conditions of the contract, were not permitted to depart, until after several months of anxiety had elapsed, when the scarcity and badness of provisions had brought on a pestilential disorder, both among the inhabitants

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and the ſoldiers. Thus, from a reluctance to dip their hands in human blood, and from the dread of inſult to which their feebler connexions were expoſed, this unfortunate town, which contained near twenty thouſand inhabitants, was betrayed into a diſgraceful reſignation of their arms, which the natural love of liberty ſhould have inſpired them to have held for their own defence, while ſubjected to the caprice of an arbitrary maſter. After their arms were delivered up and ſecured, general Gage denied the contract, and forbade their retreat; though afterwards obliged to a partial compliance, by the difficulty of obtaining food for the ſubſiſtence of his own army. On certain ſtipulated gratuities to ſome of his officers, a permit was granted them, to leave their elegant houſes, their furniture, and goods, and to depart naked from the capital, to ſeek an aſylum and ſupport from the hoſpitality of their friends in the country.

The iſlands within the harbour of Boſton were ſo plentifully ſtocked with ſheep, cattle, and poultry, that they would have afforded an ample ſupply to the Britiſh army for a long time, had they been ſuffered quietly to poſſeſs them. General Putnam, an officer of courage and experience, defeated this expectation by taking off every thing from one of the principal iſlands, under the fire of the Britiſh ſhips; at the ſame time, he was ſo fortunate as to burn

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ſeveral of their tenders, without loſing a man.* His example was followed; and from Chelſea to Point Alderton, the iſlands were ſtripped of wheat and other grain, of cattle and forage; and whatever they could not carry off, the Americans deſtroyed by fire. They burnt the light-houſe at the entrance of the harbour, and the buildings on all the iſlands, to prevent the Britiſh availing themſelves of ſuch convenient appendages for encampments ſo near the town.

While theſe tranſactions were paſſing in the eaſtern provinces, the other colonies were equally animated by the ſpirit of reſiſtance, and equally buſy in preparation. Their public bodies were undiſmayed; their temper, their conduct, and their operations, both in the civil and military line, were a fair and uniform tranſcript of the conduct of the Maſſachuſetts; and ſome of them equally experienced thus early, the rigorous proceedings of their unrelenting governors.

New York was alarmed ſoon after the commencement of hoſtilities near Boſton, by a rumor, that a part of the armament expected from Great Britain, was to be ſtationed there to awe the country, and for the protection of the numerous loyaliſts in the city. In ſome inſtances,

* General Putnam was an old American officer of diſtinguiſhed bravery, plain manners, and ſober habits; nouriſhed in agricultural life, and thoſe ſimple principles, that excite the virtuous to duty, in every department.

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the province of New York had not yet fully acceded to the doings of the general congreſs; but they now applied to them for advice, and ſhewed themſelves equally ready to renounce their allegiance to the king of Great Britain, and to unite in the common cauſe in all reſpects, as any of the other colonies. Agreeable to the recommendation of congreſs, they ſent off their women, children, and effects, and ordered a number of men to be embodied, and hold themſelves in readineſs for immediate ſervice.

Tryon was the laſt governor who preſided at New York under the crown of England. This gentleman had formerly been governor of North Carolina, where his ſeverities had rendered him very obnoxious. It is true, this diſpoſition was principally exerciſed towards a ſet of diſorderly, ignorant people, who had felt themſelves oppreſſed, had embodied, and ſtyling themſelves *regulators*, oppoſed the authority of the laws. After they had been ſubdued, and ſeveral of the ringleaders executed, governor Tryon returned to England, but was again ſent out as governor of the province of New York. He was received with cordiality, treated with great reſpect, and was for a time much eſteemed, by many of the inhabitants of the city, and the neighbouring country. Very ſoon after the conteſt became warm between Great Britain and the inhabitants of America, he, like all the

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other governors in the American colonies, tenacious of ſupporting the prerogatives of the crown, laid aſide that ſpirit of lenity he had previouſly affected to feel.

Governor Tryon entered with great zeal into all the meaſures of adminiſtration; and endeavoured with art, influence, and intrigue, of which he was perfectly maſter, to induce the city of New York, and the inhabitants under his government, to ſubmit quietly, and to decline a union of opinion and action with the other colonies, in their oppoſition to the new regulations of the Britiſh parliament. But he ſoon found he could not avail himſelf ſufficiently of the intereſt he poſſeſſed among ſome of the firſt characters in the city, to carry the point, and ſubdue the ſpirit of liberty, which was every day appreciating in that colony.

On the determination of the provincial congreſs to arreſt the crown officers, and diſarm the perſons of thoſe who were denominated *tories*, governor Tryon began to be apprehenſive for his own ſafety. The congreſs of New York had reſolved, "that it be recommended to the "ſeveral provincial aſſemblies, or conventions, "and councils, or committees of ſafety, to arreſt "and ſecure every perſon in their reſpective col-"onies, whoſe going at large may, in their opin-"ion, endanger the ſafety of the colony, or the "liberties of America."

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Though governor Tryon was not particularly named, he apprehended himſelf a principal perſon pointed at in this reſolve. This awakened his fears to ſuch a degree, that he left the ſeat of government, and went on board the Halifax packet; from whence he wrote the mayor of the city, that he was there ready to execute any ſuch buſineſs, as the circumſtances of the times would permit. But the indifference as to the reſidence, or even the conduct of a plantation governor, was now become ſo general among the inhabitants of America, that he ſoon found his command in New York was at an end. After this he put himſelf at the head of a body of loyaliſts, and annoyed the inhabitants of New York and New Jerſey, and wherever elſe he could penetrate, with the aſſiſtance of ſome Britiſh troops that occaſionally joined them.

The governors of the ſeveral colonies, as if hurried by a conſciouſneſs of their own guilt, flying like fugitives to ſcreen themſelves from the reſentment of the people, on board the king's ſhips, appear as if they had been compoſed of ſimilar characters to thoſe deſcribed by a writer of the hiſtory of ſuch as were appointed to office in the more early ſettlement of the American colonies. He ſaid, "it unfortunately "happened for our American provinces, that a "government in any of our colonies in thoſe "parts, was ſcarcely looked upon in any other "light than that of a hoſpital, where the fa-

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"vorites of the miniſtry might lie, till they had "recovered their broken fortunes, and often-"times they ſerved as an aſylum from their "creditors."*

The neighbouring government of New Jerſey was for ſome time equally embarraſſed with that of New York. They felt the effects of the impreſſions made by governor Franklin, in favor of the meaſures of adminiſtration; but not ſo generally as to preclude many of the inhabitants from uniting with the other colonies, in vigorous ſteps to preſerve their civil freedom. Governor Franklin had, among many other expreſſions which diſcovered his opinions, obſerved in a letter to Mr. ſecretary Conway, "it "gives me great pleaſure, that I have been able "through all the late diſturbances, to preſerve "the tranquillity of this province, notwith-"ſtanding the endeavours of ſome to ſtimulate "the populace to ſuch acts as have diſgraced "the colonies." He kept up this tone of reproach, until he alſo was deprived by the people of his command; and New Jerſey, by the authority of committees, ſeized all the money in the public treaſury, and appropriated it to the pay of the troops raiſing for the common defence. They took every other prudent meaſure in their power, to place themſelves in readineſs for the critical moment.

* Modern Univerſal Hiſtory, vol. xxxix. p. 357.

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Pennſylvania, though immediately under the eye of congreſs, had ſome peculiar difficulties to ſtruggle with, from a proprietary government, from the partizans of the crown, and the great body of the quakers, moſt of them oppoſed to the American cauſe. But the people in general were guarded and vigilant, and far from neglecting the moſt neceſſary ſteps for general defence.

In Virginia, Maryland, and the Carolinas, where they had the greateſt number of African ſlaves, their embarraſſments were accumulated, and the dangers which hung over them, peculiarly aggravated. From their long habit of filling their country with foreign ſlaves, they were threatened with a hoſt of domeſtic enemies, from which the other colonies had nothing to fear. The Virginians had been diſpoſed in general to treat their governor, lord Dunmore, and his family, with every mark of reſpect; and had not his intemperate zeal in the ſervice of his maſter given univerſal diſguſt, he might have remained longer among them, and finally have left them in a much leſs diſgraceful manner.

However qualified this gentleman might have been to preſide in any of the colonies, in more pacific ſeaſons, he was little calculated for the times, when ability and moderation, energy and condeſcenſion, coolneſs in deciſion, and delicacy

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in execution, were highly requiſite to govern a people ſtruggling with the poniard at their throat and the ſword in their hand, againſt the potent invaders of their privileges and claims.

He had the inhumanity early to intimate his deſigns if oppoſition ran high, to declare freedom to the blacks, and on any appearance of hoſtile reſiſtance to the king's authority, to arm them againſt their maſters. Neither the houſe of burgeſſes, nor the people at large, were diſpoſed to recede from their determinations in conſequence of his threats, nor to ſubmit to any authority that demanded implicit obedience, on pain of devaſtation and ruin. Irritated by oppoſition, too raſh for conſideration, too haughty for condeſcenſion, and fond of diſtinguiſhing himſelf in ſupport of the parliamentary ſyſtem, lord Dunmore diſmantled the fort in Williamſburg, plundered the magazines, threatened to lay the city in aſhes, and depopulate the country: As far as he was able, he executed his nefarious purpoſes.

When his lordſhip found the reſolution of the houſe of burgeſſes, of committees and conventions, was no where to be ſhaken, he immediately proclaimed emancipation to the blacks, and put arms into their hands. He excited diſturbances in the back ſettlements, and encouraged the natives bordering on the ſouthern co-

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lonies, to ruſh from the wilderneſs, and make inroads on the frontiers. For this buſineſs, he employed as his agent one *Connolly*, a Scotch renegado, who travelled from Virginia to the Ohio, and from the Ohio to general Gage at Boſton, with an account of his ſucceſs, and a detail of his negociations. From general Gage he received a colonel's commiſſion, and was by him ordered to return to the ſavages, and encourage them, with the aid of ſome Britiſh ſettlers on the river Ohio, to penetrate the back country, and diſtreſs the borders of Virginia. But fortunately, Connolly was arreſted in his career, and with his accomplices taken and impriſoned on his advance through Maryland; his papers were ſeized, and a full diſcloſure of the cruel deſigns of his employers ſent forward to congreſs.

By the indiſcreet conduct of lord Dunmore, the ferments in Virginia daily increaſed. All reſpect towards the governor was loſt, and his lady terrified by continual tumult left the palace, and took ſanctuary on board one of the king's ſhips. After much altercation and diſpute, with every thing irritating on the one ſide, and no marks of ſubmiſſion on the other, his lordſhip left his ſeat, and with his family and a few loyaliſts retired on board the Fowey man of war, where his lady in great anxiety had reſided many days.* There he found ſome

* Lady Dunmore ſoon after took paſſage for England.

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of the moſt criminal of his partizans had reſorted before he quitted the government; with theſe and ſome banditti that had taken ſhelter in a conſiderable number of veſſels under his lordſhip's command, and the aſſiſtance of a few run-away negroes, he carried on a kind of predatory war on the colony for ſeveral months. The burning of Norfolk, the beſt town in the territory of Virginia, completed his diſgraceful campaign.*

The adminiſtration of lord William Campbel, and Mr. Martin, the governors of the two Carolinas, had no diſtinguiſhed trait from that of moſt of the other colonial governors. They held up the ſupreme authority of parliament in the ſame high ſtyle of dignity, and announced the reſentment of affronted majeſty, and the ſevere puniſhment that would be inflicted on congreſſes, conventions and committees, and the miſerable ſituation to which the people of America would be reduced, if they continued to adhere to the *factious demagogues* of party. With the ſame ſpirit and cruel policy that inſtigated lord Dunmore, they carried on their negociations with the Indians, and encouraged the inſurrections of the negroes, until all harmony

* See Appendix, Note, No. XII. relative to Virginia. It has been aſſerted by ſome that the inhabitants themſelves aſſiſted in the conflagration of Norfolk, to prevent lord Dunmore's retaining it as a place of arms.

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and confidence were totally deſtroyed between themſelves and the people, who ſupported their own meaſures for defence in the higheſt tone of freedom and independence. Both the governors of North and South Carolina ſoon began to be apprehenſive of the effects of public reſentment, and about this time thought it neceſſary for their own ſafety to repair on board the king's ſhips, though their language and manners had not been equally raſh and abuſive with that of the governor of Virginia.

Henry Laurens, Eſq. was preſident of the provincial congreſs of South Carolina at this period; whoſe uniform virtue and independence of ſpirit, we ſhall ſee conſpicuouſly diſplayed hereafter on many other trying occaſions. It was not long after the preſent period, when he wrote to a friend and obſerved, that "he meant to finiſh his peregrinations in this world, by a journey through the United States; then to retire and learn to die." But he had this important leſſon to learn in the ordeal of affliction and diſappointment, that he ſeverely experienced in his public life and domeſtic ſorrows, which he bore with that firmneſs and equanimity, which ever dignifies great and good characters.

Sir Robert Eden, governor of Maryland, a man of ſocial manners, jovial temper, and humane diſpoſition, had been more diſpoſed to

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lenity and forbearance, than any of the great officers in the American department. But ſo high wrought was the oppoſition to Britiſh authority, and the jealouſies entertained of all magiſtrates appointed by the crown, that it was not long after the departure of the neighbouring governors, before he was ordered by congreſs to quit his government, and repair to England. He was obliged to comply, though with much reluctance. He had been in danger of very rough uſage before his departure, from general Lee, who had intercepted a confidential letter from lord George Germaine to governor Eden. Lee threatened to ſeize and confine him, but by the interference of the committee of ſafety, and ſome military officers at Annapolis, the order was not executed. They thought it wrong to conſider him as reſponſible for the ſentiments contained in the letters of his correſpondents; and only deſired Mr. Eden to give his word of honor, that he would not leave the province before the meeting of a general congreſs of that ſtate; nor did they ſuffer him to be farther moleſted. He was permitted quietly to take leave of his friends and his province, after he had received the order of the continental congreſs for his departure; and in hopes of returning in more tranquil times, he left his property behind him, and ſailed for England in the ſummer, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-ſix.*

* See the conduct relative to ſir Robert Eden, and the tranſactions between the ſouthern governors and the peo-

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The influence of ſir James Wright the governor of Georgia, prevented that ſtate from acceding to the meaſure of a general congreſs, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-four. Yet the people at large were equally diſaffected, and ſoon after, in an addreſs to his excellency, acknowledged themſelves the only link in the great American chain, that had not publicly united with the other colonies in their oppoſition to the claims of parliament. They called a provincial congreſs, who reſolved in the name of their conſtituents, that they would receive no merchandize whatever from Great Britain or Ireland after the ſeventh day of July, one thouſand, ſeven hundred and ſeventy-five; that they fully approved and adopted the American declaration and bill of rights, publiſhed by the continental congreſs; that they ſhould now join with the other colonies, chooſe delegates to meet in general congreſs; and that they meant invariably to adhere to the public cauſe, and that they would no longer lie under the ſuſpicion of being unconcerned for the rights and freedom of America.

Indeed the torch of war ſeemed already to have reached the moſt diſtant corner of the con-

ple, this year, at large in the Britiſh Remembrancer, which is here anticipated to prevent interrupting the narration by any further detail of general Lee's tranſactions in Maryland relative to governor Eden.

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tinent, the flame had ſpread and penetrated to the laſt province in America held by Great Britain, and a way opened to the gates of Quebec, before adminiſtration had dreamed of the ſmalleſt danger in that quarter. Soon after the action at Lexington, a number of enterpriſing young men, principally from Connecticut, propoſed to each other a ſudden march towards the lakes, and a bold attempt to ſurprize Ticonderoga, garriſoned by the king's troops. Theſe young adventurers applied to governor Trumbull, and obtained leave of the aſſembly of Connecticut to purſue their project; and ſo ſecretly, judiciouſly, and rapidly was the expedition conducted, that they entered the garriſon, and ſaluted the principal officer as their priſoner, before he had any reaſon to apprehend the enemy was near.* This enterpriſe was conducted by the colonels Eaſton, Arnold, and Allen; the invaders poſſeſſed themſelves of a conſiderable number of braſs and iron cannon, and many warlike ſtores, without ſuffering any loſs of life.

It had been proved beyond a doubt that the Britiſh government had ſpared no pains to encourage the inroads of the ſavages; of conſequence this *coup de main* was deemed a very me-

* On the ſurpriſe of Ticonderoga, the commanding officer there inquired by whoſe authority this was done? Colonel Allen replied, "I demand your ſurrender in the name of the great Jehovah and of the continental congreſs."

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ritorious and important ſtep. Ticonderoga commanded all the paſſes between Canada and the other provinces. The poſſeſſion of this important fortreſs on the lake Champlain, in a great meaſure ſecured the frontiers from the incurſions of the ſavages, who had been excited by the cruel policy of Britain to war, which, by theſe ferocious nations, is ever carried on by modes at which humanity ſhudders, and civilization bluſhes to avow.*

Thus was the ſword brandiſhed through the land, and hung ſuſpended from cruel execution of all the evils attendant on a ſtate of civil convulſion, only by the faint hope, that the ſovereign of Britain might yet be ſoftened to hold out the olive-branch in one hand, and a redreſs of grievances in the other. But every pacific hope was reverſed, and all proſpect of the reſtoration of harmony annihilated early in the ſummer, by the arrival of a large reinforcement at Boſton, commanded by three general officers of high conſideration.

All former deluſive expectations now extinguiſhed, both the ſtateſman and the peaſant, actuated by the feelings of the man and the patriot, diſcovered a moſt unconquerable magna-

* A few months after this expedition, colonel Allen experienced a reverſe of fortune, by falling into the hands of the Britiſh near Montreal, was loaded with irons, and immediately ſent to England.

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nimity of ſpirit. Undiſmayed by the neceſſity of an appeal to the ſword, though unprovided with ſufficient reſources for ſo arduous a conflict, they animated each other to ſuſtain it, if neceſſary, until they ſhould leave their foes only a depopulated ſoil, if victory ſhould declare in their favor. Nature revolts at the idea, when the poniard is puſhed by deſpair; yet preferring death to thraldom, the Americans were every where deciſive in council, and determined in action. There appeared that kind of enthuſiaſm, which ſets danger at defiance, and impels the manly arm to reſiſt, till the warm current that plays round the heart, is poured out as a libation at the ſhrine of freedom.

On the other hand, the fears of the dependents on the crown were diſſipated by the augmentation of the Britiſh army, their hopes invigorated, and every artifice uſed, to ſpread terror and diſmay among the people. The turpitude of *rebellion*, and the dread conſequences of defeat, were painted in the moſt gloomy colours; the merits and the abilities of the principal officers extolled, their diſtinguiſhed names and characters enhanced, and every thing circulated that might tend to weaken the reſolution of the people.

It was ſaid, general Burgoyne commanded a ſquadron of light-horſe, which was to ſcour the

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country, and pick up the leading inſurgents in every quarter. The capacity, bravery, and virtues of general Clinton were every where announced by the votaries of adminiſtration; and the name of *Howe* was at that time, at once revered, beloved, and dreaded in America. A monumental tribute of applauſe had been reared in honor of one brother, who had fallen in that country in the late war between Great Britain and France; and the gratitude of the people had excited a predilection in favor of the other, and indeed of every branch of that family. But this partiality was ſoon ſucceeded by an univerſal diſguſt towards the two ſurviving brothers, lord and general Howe, who undertook the conqueſt of America; a project held reproachful, and which would have reflected diſhonor on the perpetrators, even had it been crowned with ſucceſs.

In the beginning of June, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-five, general Gage thought proper to act a more decided part than he had hitherto done. He publiſhed a proclamation, denouncing *martial law* in all its rigors againſt any one who ſhould ſupply, conceal, or correſpond with, any of thoſe he was pleaſed to ſtigmatize by the epithets of *traitors*, *rebels*, or *inſurgents*. But as an act of grace, he offered pardon in the king's name to all who ſhould lay down their arms and ſubmit to mercy, only excluding by name, Samuel Adams and

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John Hancock; he alleged that their crimes were of too flagitious a nature to hope for pardon.

This proſcription diſcovered the little knowledge which general Gage then poſſeſſed of the temper of the times, the diſpoſition of the people at large, or the character of individuals. His diſcrimination, rather accidental than judicious, ſet theſe two gentlemen in the moſt conſpicuous point of view, and drew the particular attention of the whole continent to their names, diſtinguiſhed from many of their compeers, more by this ſingle circumſtance, than by ſuperior ability or exertion. By this they became at once the favorites of popularity, and the objects of general applauſe, which at that time would have been the fortune of any one, honored by ſuch a mark of diſapprobation of the Britiſh commander in chief.

Mr. Adams was a gentleman of a good education, a decent family, but no fortune. Early nurtured in the principles of civil and religious liberty, he poſſeſſed a quick underſtanding, a cool head, ſtern manners, a ſmooth addreſs, and a Roman-like firmneſs, united with that ſagacity and penetration that would have made a figure in a conclave. He was at the ſame time liberal in opinion, and uniformly devout; ſocial with men of all denominations, grave in deportment; placid, yet ſevere; ſober and inde-

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fatigable; calm in ſeaſons of difficulty, tranquil and unruffled in the vortex of political altercation; too firm to be intimidated, too haughty for condeſcenſion, his mind was replete with reſources that diſſipated fear, and extricated in the greateſt emergencies. Thus qualified, he ſtood forth early, and continued firm, through the great ſtruggle, and may juſtly claim a large ſhare of honor, due to that ſpirit of energy which oppoſed the meaſures of adminiſtration, and produced the independence of America. Through a long life he exhibited on all occaſions, an example of patriotiſm, religion, and virtue honorary to the human character.

Mr. Hancock was a young gentleman of fortune, of more external accompliſhments than real abilities. He was polite in manners, eaſy in addreſs, affable, civil, and liberal. With theſe accompliſhments, he was capricious, ſanguine, and implacable: naturally generous, he was profuſe in expenſe; he ſcattered largeſſes without diſcretion, and purchaſed favors by the waſte of wealth, until he reached the ultimatum of his wiſhes, which centered in the focus of popular applauſe. He enliſted early in the cauſe of his country, at the inſtigation of ſome gentlemen of penetration, who thought his ample fortune might give conſideration, while his fickleneſs could not injure, ſo long as he was under the influence of men of ſuperior judgment. They complimented him by nominations to com-

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mittees of importance, till he plunged too far to recede; and flattered by ideas of his own conſequence, he had taken a decided part before the battle of Lexington, and was preſident of the provincial congreſs, when that event took place.

By the appearance of zeal, added to a certain alacrity of engaging in any public department, Mr. Hancock was influential in keeping up the tide of oppoſition; and by a concurrence of fortuitous circumſtances, among which this proſcription was the moſt capital, he reached the ſummit of popularity, which raiſed him afterwards to the moſt elevated ſtations, and very fortunately he had the honor of affixing his ſignature as preſident, to many of the ſubſequent proceedings of the continental congreſs, which will ever hold an illuſtrious rank in the page of hiſtory.

Mr. Hancock had repaired to Philadelphia, to take his ſeat in congreſs, immediately after he made his eſcape from Lexington. Part of the object of the excurſion of the eighteenth of April, was the capture of him and Mr. Adams; they were both particularly inquired for, and the houſe in which they lodged ſurrounded by the king's troops, the moment after theſe gentlemen had retreated half-naked. Had they been found, they would undoubtedly have been ſhut up in Boſton, if nothing more fatal had

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been inflicted, inſtead of being left at liberty to purſue a political career that will tranſmit their names with applauſe to poſterity.

The abſence of the late worthy preſident of congreſs, Mr. Randolph, and the arrival of Mr. Hancock at Philadelphia, at the fortunate moment when the enthuſiaſm inſpired by Gage's proclamation was at the height, both concurred to promote his elevation. He was choſen to preſide in the reſpectable aſſembly of delegates, avowedly on the ſole principle of his having been proſcribed by general Gage. It was uncouthly ſaid, by a member of congreſs, that "they would ſhew *mother Britain* how little "they cared for her, by chooſing a Maſſachu-"ſetts man for their preſident, who had been "recently excluded from pardon by public pro-"clamation." The choice was ſuddenly made, and with rather too much levity for the times, or for the dignity of the office. Mr. Hancock's modeſty prompted him for a moment to heſitate on the unexpected event, as if diffident of his own qualifications; when one of the members,* of a more robuſt conſtitution, and leſs delicacy of manners, took him in his arms, and placed him in the preſidential chair.

* A Mr. Harriſon, from Virginia, the ſame who made the above ſpeech. Theſe circumſtances were verbally detailed to the author of theſe annals by a reſpectable member of congreſs then preſent.

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This ſudden elevation might place the fortunate candidate in a ſimilar ſituation with the celebrated pope Ganganelli, who obſerved of himſelf, that after putting on the triple crown, he often felt his own pulſe, to ſee if he was the ſame identical perſon he was a few years before. Mr. Hancock continued in the preſidential chair until October, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-nine, when he took a formal leave of congreſs, and never again rejoined that reſpectable body. His time however was fully occupied in his own ſtate in the various employments, to which he was called by a majority of voices in the Maſſachuſetts, where his popular talents had a commanding influence, during the reſidue of his life.* But in the progreſs of the revolution, ſeveral men of leſs conſequence than Mr. Hancock, and far inferior claims to patriotiſm, were raiſed to the ſame dignified ſtation.

In the effervescence of popular commotions, it is not uncommon to ſee the favorites of fortune elevated to the pinnacle of rank by trivial circumſtances, that appear the reſult of accident.

Thoſe who mark the changes and the progreſs of events through all revolutions, will frequently ſee diſtinctions beſtowed, where there are no

* See Appendix, Note, No. XIII.

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commanding talents, and honors retained, more from the ſtrong influence of popular enthuſiaſm, than from the guidance of reaſon, which operates too little on the generality of mankind.

It may be obſerved, that public commotions in human affairs, like the ſhocks of nature, convulſe the whole ſyſtem, and level the lofty mountains, which have ariſen for ages above the clouds, beneath the vallies; while the hillock, unnoticed before, is raiſed to a pitch of elevation, that renders it a land-mark for the eye of the weary ſeaman to reſt upon.

All revolutions evince the truth of the obſervation of a writer, that "Many men great "in title, have the ſpirit of ſlaves, many low in "fortune, have great ſpirits, many a Cicero "has kept ſheep, many a Cæſar followed the "plough, many a Virgil folded cattle."*

The ſudden rotations in human affairs are wiſely permitted by Providence, to remind mankind of their natural equality, to check the pride of wealth, to reſtrain the inſolence of rank and family diſtinctions, which too frequently oppreſs the various claſſes in ſociety.

The late proclamation of general Gage was conſidered as a prelude to immediate action,

* Sir Francis Oſborne's Memoirs.

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and from all intelligence that could be obtained from the town, there appeared the ſtrongeſt reaſon to expect a ſecond ſally from the troops lying in Boſton. Uncertain on which ſide the ſtorm would begin, the provincials thought it neceſſary to guard againſt ſurpriſe, by fortifying on both ſides of the town; in the beſt manner they were able. They threw up ſome ſlight entrenchments at Roxbury, and ſeveral other places on the ſouth ſide of Boſton; at the ſame time, on the night of the ſixteenth of June, they began ſome works at the extreme part of a peninſula at the north, running from Charleſtown to the river, which ſeparates that town from Boſton. They executed this buſineſs with ſuch ſecrecy and diſpatch, that the officers of a ſhip of war then in the river, expreſſed their aſtoniſhment in the morning, when they ſaw ſome conſiderable works reared and fortified in the compaſs of a few hours, where, from the contiguous ſituation,* they leaſt expected the Americans would look them in the face.

The alarm was immediately given, and orders iſſued, that a continual fire ſhould be kept

* Theſe works were erected on Breed's hill. This was the ſpot that coſt the Britiſh army ſo dear through the glorious action of that day, generally ſtyled the battle of *Bunker hill*. After the Americans retreated, the Britiſh left Breed's hill, took their ſtand, and ſtrongly fortified Bunker hill, about a fourth of a mile diſtant. Thus has the name of the place of action been frequently confounded.

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playing upon the unfiniſhed works, from the ſhips, the floating batteries in the river, and a fortified hill on the other ſide; but with unparralleled perſeverance, the Americans continued to ſtrengthen their entrenchments, without returning a ſhot until near noon, when the Britiſh army, conſiſting of ten companies of grenadiers, four battalions of infantry, and a heavy train of artillery, advanced under the command of general Pigot and major general Howe. A ſevere engagement enſued: many men and ſeveral brave officers of the royal army fell on the firſt fire of the Americans. This unexpected ſalute threw them into ſome confuſion; but by the firmneſs of general Howe, and the timely aſſiſtance of general Clinton, who, with a freſh detachment arrived in ſeaſon, the troops were immediately rallied, and brought to the charge with redoubled fury. They mounted the ramparts with fixed bayonets, and notwithſtanding the moſt heroic reſiſtance, they ſoon made themſelves maſters of the diſputed hill.

Overpowered by numbers, and exhauſted by the fatigue of the preceding night, and all hope of reinforcement cut off by the inceſſant fire of the ſhips acroſs a neck of land that ſeparated them from the country, the provincials were obliged to retreat, and leave the ground to the Britiſh troops. Many of their moſt experienced officers acknowledged the valor of their opponents; and that in proportion to the forces en-

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gaged, there had been few actions in which the military renown of Britiſh troops had been more ſeverely tried. Their chagrin was manifeſt, that the bravery of Britiſh ſoldiers, which had been often ſignalized in the nobleſt feats of valor, ſhould be thus reſiſted; that they ſhould be galled, wounded, and ſlaughtered, by an *handful* of *cottagers*, as they termed them, under officers of little military ſkill, and leſs experience, whom they had affected to hold in ineffable contempt.

There is a certain point of military honor, that often urges againſt the feelings of humanity, to dip the ſword in blood. Thus, from the early maxims of implicit obedience, the firſt principle of military education, many men of real merit hazarded fortune, life, and reputation, in the inglorious work of devaſtation and ruin, through the fields and villages of America. Yet ſuch was the reluctance ſhewn by ſome to engage with ſpirit in the diſagreeable enterpriſe of this day, that their officers were obliged to uſe the utmoſt ſeverity towards them, to ſtimulate others to perſevere. The town of Charleſtown was reduced to aſhes by the fire of the ſhipping, while the land forces were ſtorming the hills. Thus, in concert, was this flouriſhing and compact town deſtroyed, in the moſt wanton diſplay of power. There were about four hundred dwelling-houſes in the centre of Chaſleſtown, which, with the out-houſes adja-

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cent, and many buildings in the ſuburbs, were alſo ſunk in the conflagration. The fate of this unfortunate town was beheld with ſolemnity and regret, by many even of thoſe who were not favorably diſpoſed to the liberties of the weſtern world. The ingratitude which marked the tranſaction aggravated the guilty deed. We have recently ſeen the inhabitants of that place, prompted by humanity, opening their doors for the relief, and pouring balm into the wounds, of the routed corps on the nineteenth of April. This in the eye of juſtice muſt enhance the atrocity, and forever ſtigmatize the ingratitude, which ſo ſoon after wrapped the town in flames, and ſent out the naked inhabitants, the prey of poverty and deſpair.

There are few things which place the pride of man in a more conſpicuous point of view, than the advantages claimed in all military rencontres that are not deciſive. Thus, though at the expenſe of many lives, and the loſs of ſome of their braveſt officers, the Britiſh army exulted much in becoming maſters of an unfiniſhed entrenchment, and driving the Americans from their advanced poſt. Upwards of one thouſand men, including the wounded, fell in this action on the royal ſide. Among the ſlain was lieutenant colonel Abercrombie, an officer much eſteemed by his friends and his country, and a major Pitcairn, a gentleman of ſo much merit, that his fall was lamented even by his

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enemies. His valor on this occaſion would have reflected glory on his memory, had it been ſignalized in a more honorable cauſe.*

While this tragedy was acting on the other ſide of the Charles river, the terror and conſternation of the town of Boſton are ſcarcely deſcribable. In the utmoſt anxiety, they beheld the ſcene from the eminences. Apprehenſive for themſelves, and trembling for their friends engaged in the bloody conflict, they were not leſs affected by the hideous ſhrieks of the women and children connected with the king's troops, who beheld their huſbands, their friends, and relations, wounded, mangled, and ſlain, ferried over the river in boat-loads, from the field of carnage.

On the other ſide, though the Americans were obliged to quit the field with very conſiderable loſs, yet they gloried in the honor they had this day acquired by arms. They retired only one mile from the ſcene of action, where they took poſſeſſion of an advantageous height, and threw up new works on Proſpect hill, with the enthuſiaſm of men determined to be free.

* It may be obſerved, that his zeal in the cauſe in which he was engaged, had hurried him previous to this action to ſome ſteps that could not eaſily be forgiven by Americans, particularly by thoſe who believed him to have been the officer, who firſt gave the order for the king's troops to fire on the militia aſſembling at Lexington, on their appearance.

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They ſoon environed the town of Boſton on all ſides with military parade, and though they wept the fall of many brave men, they bade a daily challenge to their enemies.

But a cloud was caſt over every face by the death of the intrepid major general Joſeph Warren, who, to the inexpreſſible grief of his countrymen, loſt his life in the memorable action uſually ſtyled the battle of Bunker hill. He fell covered with laurels, chooſing rather to die in the field, than to grace the victory of his foes by the triumph they would have enjoyed in his impriſonment. He had been choſen preſident of the provincial congreſs, when Mr. Hancock repaired to Philadelphia, and was an active volunteer in ſeveral ſkirmiſhes that had taken place ſince the commencement of hoſtilities, which in the minds of his enemies would have ſanctioned the ſevereſt indignities their reſentment might have dictated, had he fallen into their hands at this early period of the war.

This gentleman had been appointed a major general only four days previous to the late action: he was educated in the medical line, and was much reſpected for his profeſſional as well as his political abilities. He poſſeſſed a clear underſtanding, a ſtrong mind, a diſpoſition humane and generous, with manners eaſy, affable, and engaging; but zealous, active, and ſanguine, in the cauſe of his oppreſſed country, it

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is to be lamented, that he rather incautiouſly courted the poſt of danger, and ruſhed precipitately on his fate, while more important occaſions required his paying ſome regard to perſonal ſafety. Yet, if the *love* of *fame* is the ſtrongeſt paſſion of the mind, and human nature pants for diſtinction in the flowery field, perhaps there was never a moment of more unfading glory, offered to the wiſhes of the brave, than that which marked the *exit* of this heroic officer.

He was the firſt victim of rank that fell by the ſword in the conteſt between Great Britain and America: and the conflagration of Charleſtown, enkindled by the wanton barbarity of his enemies, lighted his *manes* to the grave. Theſe circumſtances enſure a record in every hiſtorical annal, while his memory will be revered by every lover of his country, and the name of *Warren* will be enrolled at the head of that band of patriots and heroes, who ſacrificed their lives to purchaſe the independence of America.

After the late action, the Britiſh troops appeared to be in no condition for further operations; weakened by the ſevere engagement near Bunker hill, ſickly in the camp, and diſheartened by unexpected bravery, where they had feared no reſiſtance; ſtraitened for proviſions, and deſtitute of forage, except what was piratically plundered from the neighbouring

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ſhores, they kept themſelves ſhut up in Boſton the remainder of the ſummer. Here they continued in ſo quiet a manner, that had they not ſometimes for their own amuſement ſaluted the country with the ſound of a uſeleſs cannonade, or the burſting of a ſhell, the people might have forgotten, that the monarch of Britain had ſeveral thouſand ſoldiers cooped up within the walls of a city that ſtill acknowledged him as their ſovereign. The inhabitants of the town were held in dureſs, but their military maſters did not preſume to enlarge their own quarters.

While this intereſting ſcene had been acting in the field, the congreſs of the Maſſachuſetts had ſent on to Philadelphia for the opinion of the united delegates relative to their aſſumption of a regular form of government. Articles of confederation had been agreed to in general congreſs, in which a recapitulation of grievances, and the reaſons for taking up arms were ſubjoined in terms little ſhort of a declaration of war. Theſe had been publiſhed in May, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-five; but their ratification by legiſlative bodies, or provincial congreſſes, had not yet generally taken place. But as the independence of America was not yet formally declared, it was in contemplation with many members of congreſs, as well as others of equal judgment, that when all ſhould be convinced, that the breach

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between the two countries was totally irreconcileable, that the ſame modes of legiſlation and government ſhould be adopted in all the colonies. It was then thought that a ſimilarity of manners, police, and government, throughout the continent, would cement the union, and might ſupport the ſovereignty of each individual ſtate, while yet, for general purpoſes, all ſhould be in ſubordination to the congreſſional head.

An elegant writer has obſerved, that it is no eaſy matter to render the union of independent ſtates perfect and entire, unleſs the genius and forms of their reſpective governments are in ſome degree ſimilar. The judicious body aſſembled at Philadelphia were fully convinced of this; they were not inſenſible that a number of ſtates, under different conſtitutions, and various modes of government and civil police, each regulated by their own municipal laws, would ſoon be ſwayed by local intereſts that might create irreconcileable feuds tending to disjoint the whole.* It was therefore judged beſt, to re-

* Congreſs had about this time adopted the reſolution to adviſe each of the colonies explicitly to renounce the government of Great Britain, and to form conſtitutions of government for themſelves, adequate to their exigencies, and agreeable to their own modes of thinking, where any variation of ſentiment prevailed. This was acted upon, and a repreſentative government, conſiſting of one or more branches, was adopted in each colony.

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commend to the Maſſachuſetts, the reſumption of a regular form of government in the preſent exigence, on the plan of the old charter of William and Mary, which gave authority to the majority of counſellors, choſen by an houſe of repreſentatives, to exerciſe all governmental acts, as if the governor was really abſent or dead.

On this recommendation, James Warren, Eſq. preſident of the provincial congreſs, by their authority, iſſued writs in his own name, requiring the freeholders in every town to convene, and elect their repreſentatives, to meet at Watertown on the twentieth of July, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-five. This ſummons was readily obeyed, and a full houſe appeared at the time and place appointed; the late preſident of the provincial congreſs was unanimouſly choſen ſpeaker of the new houſe. Regardleſs of the vacant chair, they ſelected a council, and the two branches proceeded to legiſlation and the internal police of the province, as uſually had been the practice in the abſence of the governor and lieutenant governor.*

Thus, after living for more than twelve months without any legal government, without law, and without any regular adminiſtration of juſtice, but what aroſe from the internal ſenſe of moral obligation, which is ſeldom a

* See Appendix, Note, No. XIV.

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ſufficient reſtraint on the people at large, the Maſſachuſetts returned peaceably to the regular and neceſſary ſubordination of civil ſociety. Reduced nearly to a ſtate of nature with regard to all civil or authoritative ties, it is almoſt incredible, that the principles of rectitude and common juſtice ſhould have been ſo generally influential. For, ſuch is the reſtleſs and hoſtile diſpoſition of man, that it will not ſuffer him to remain long in a ſtate of repoſe, whether on the ſummit of human glory, or reclined on his own native turf, when probable contingencies promiſe him the acquiſition of either wealth or fame. From the wants, the weakneſs, and the ferocity of human nature, mankind cannot ſubſiſt long in ſociety, without ſome ſtable ſyſtem of coercive power. Yet amidſt the complicated difficulties with which they were ſurrounded, the horrors of anarchy were far from prevailing in the province: vice ſeemed to be abaſhed by the examples of moderation, diſintereſtedneſs, and generoſity, exhibited by many of the patriotic leaders of preſent meaſures.

It has been obſerved already, that not a drop of blood had ever been ſpilt by the people in any of the commotions preceding the commencement of war, and that the fear of popular reſentment was undoubtedly a guard on the conduct of ſome individuals. Others, checked by the frowns of public virtue, crimes of an atrocious nature had ſeldom been perpetrated: all claſſes ſeemed to be awed by the mag-

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nitude of the objects before them; private disputes were amicably adjusted or postponed, until time and events should give the opportunity of legal decision, or render the claims of individuals of little consequence, by their being ingulfed in the torrent of despotism, generally poured out by the conqueror, who fights for the establishment of uncontrolled power.

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CHAPTER VII.

A Continental Army—Mr. Washington appointed to the Command.—General Gage recalled—succeeded by Sir William Howe.—Depredations on the Sea Coast—Falmouth burnt.—Canadian Affairs—Death and Character of General Montgomery.

FREEDOM, long hunted round the globe by a succession of tyrants, appeared at this period, as if about to erect her standard in America; the scimitar was drawn from principles, that held life and property as a feather in the balance against the chains of servitude that clanked in her disgusted ear. The blood of innocence had already crimsoned over the fields which had teemed for the nourishment of Britain, who, instead of listening to the groans of an oppressed country, had recently wrung out the tears of anguish, until the inhabitants of the plundered towns were ready to quit the elegancies of life, and take refuge in the forest, to secure the unimpaired possession of those privileges which they considered as a grant from heaven, that no earthly potentate had a right to seize with impunity.

The bulk of mankind have indeed, in all countries in their turn, been made the prey of ambition. It is a truth that no one will con-

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teſt, though all may regret, that in proportion to the increaſe of wealth, the improvement in arts, and the refinements in ſociety, the great body of the people have either by force or fraud, become the ſlaves of the few, who by chance, violence, or accident, have deſtroyed the natural equality of their aſſociates. Sanctioned by time and habit, an indefeaſible right has been claimed, that ſets ſo miſchievous a creature as man above all law, and ſubjects the lives of millions, to the rapacious will of an individual, who, by the intoxicating nature of power, ſoon forgets that there are any obligations due to the ſubject, a reptile in his opinion, made only for the drudgery neceſſary to maintain the ſplendor of government, and the ſupport of prerogative. Every ſtep taken by the Britiſh government, relative to the colonies, confirmed this truth, taught them their danger, and evinced to the Americans the neceſſity of guarding at all points, againſt the aſſumed juriſdiction of an aſſembly of men, diſpoſed to innovate continually on the rights of their fellow ſubjects who had no voice in parliament, and whoſe petitions did not reach, or had no influence on the ear of the ſovereign.

The ſucceſs of the laſt ſupplicatory addreſs offered to the parliament of Britain by the United States, ſtill hung in ſuſpenſe; yet the criſis appeared ſo alarming, that it was thought neceſſary by many, to attend immediately to the eſtabliſhment of a continental army on

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ſome ſtable and reſpectable footing. But there were ſome influential members in congreſs, who dreaded the conſequence of a ſtep ſo replete with the appearance of hoſtility, if not with the avowed deſign of independence; they obſerved, that ſuch a meaſure would be an inevitable bar to the reſtoration of harmony.

Some, who had warmly oppoſed the meaſures of adminiſtration, and ably advocated the rights of the colonies, were of this opinion. The idea of diſſevering the empire, ſhocked their feelings; they ſtill ardently wiſhed, both from the principles of humanity, and what they judged the ſoundeſt policy, to continue if poſſible, the natural connexion with Britain. Others of a more timid complexion, readily united with theſe gentlemen, and urged, notwithſtanding the contempt poured on all former ſupplications, that even, if their late petition ſhould be rejected, they ſhould yet make one effort more for conciliation and relief, by the hitherto fruitleſs mode of prayer and remonſtrance. Men of more enlarged and comprehenſive views, conſidered this propoſal as the *fineſſe* of ſhallow politicians, deſigned only to prevent the organization of a continental army.

The celebrated Machiavel, pronounced by ſome the prince of politicians, has obſerved, "that every ſtate is in danger of diſſolution, "whoſe government is not frequently reduced

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"to its original principles." The conduct of the Britiſh adminiſtration towards the colonies, the corruption of the government in every department, their deviations from firſt principles, and the enormous public debt of the nation, evinced not only the neceſſity of a reform in parliament, but appeared to require ſuch a renovation of the Britiſh conſtitution, as was not likely ſoon to take place. Thus circumſtanced, many thought it the intereſt of America, to diſſolve the connexion with ſuch a government, and were utterly oppoſed to delay, or any further application to the Britiſh king or parliament, by petition or conceſſion.

After a long debate on the ſubject, the laſt deſcription of perſons were obliged reluctantly to accede to a meaſure which they thought promiſed nothing but delay or diſgrace. By a kind of neceſſary compromiſe, a moſt humble and loyal petition directly to the king of Great Britain, was again agreed to by the delegated powers of the United States. At the ſame time, it was ſtipulated by all parties, that military preparations ſhould be made, and an army raiſed without farther heſitation. A decided majority in congreſs, voted, that twenty thouſand men ſhould be immediately equipped and ſupported at the expenſe of the United States of America. The honorable William Penn, late governor of Pennſylvania, was choſen agent to the court of Britain, and directed to

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deliver the petition to the king himſelf, and to endeavor by his perſonal influence, to procure a favorable reception to this laſt addreſs. CHAP. VII. 1775.

The command of the army, by the unanimous voice of congreſs, was veſted in George Waſhington, Eſq. then a delegate from the State of Virginia. He received this mark of confidence, from his country, with becoming modeſty, and declined all compenſation for his ſervices, more than ſhould be ſufficient to defray his expenditures, for which he would regularly account.

Mr. Waſhington was a gentleman of family and fortune, of a polite, but not a learned education; he appeared to poſſeſs a coolneſs of temper, and a degree of moderation and judgment, that qualified him for the elevated ſtation in which he was now placed; with ſome conſiderable knowledge of mankind, he ſupported the reſerve of the ſtateſman, with the occaſional affability of the courtier. In his character was blended a certain dignity, united with the appearance of good humour; he poſſeſſed courage without raſhneſs, patriotiſm and zeal without acrimony, and retained with univerſal applauſe the firſt military command, until the eſtabliſhment of independence. Through the various changes of fortune in the ſubſequent conflict, though the ſlowneſs of his movements was cenſured by ſome, his character ſuffered little diminution to the concluſion of a war, that

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from the extraordinary exigencies of an infant republic, required at times, the caution of Fabius, the energy of Cæſar, and the happy facility of expedient in diſtreſs, ſo remarkable in the military operations of the illuſtrious Frederick.* With the firſt of theſe qualities, he was endowed by nature; the ſecond was awakened by neceſſity; and the third he acquired by experience in the field of glory and danger, which extended his fame through half the globe.

In the late war between England and France, Mr. Waſhington had been in ſeveral military rencounters, and had particularly ſignalized himſelf in the unfortunate expedition under general Braddock, in the wilderneſs on the borders of the Ohio, in the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and fifty-five. His conduct on that occaſion raiſed an *eclat* of his valor and prudence; in conſequence of which many young gentlemen from all parts of the continent, allured by the name of major Waſhington, voluntarily entered the ſervice, proud of being enrolled in the liſt of officers under one eſteemed ſo gallant a commander.

General Waſhington arrived at the camp at Cambridge in the neighbourhood of Boſton, the beginning of July, one thouſand, ſeven hun-

* The late king of Pruſſia, well known for this trait in his character, by all who are acquainted with the hiſtory of his reign.

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dred and ſeventy-five. He was accompanied by ſeveral officers of diſtinction from the ſouthern ſtates, and by Charles Lee and Horatio Gates, both natives of Great Britain, appointed now to high rank in the American army. There appeared much expectation from his abilities, and a general ſatisfaction in the appointment of Mr. Waſhington to the chief command. A congratulatory addreſs, expreſſive of their eſteem, with the ſtrongeſt aſſurances of their aid and ſupport, to enable him to diſcharge the duties of his arduous and exalted ſtation, was preſented him from the provincial congreſs of Maſſachuſetts, through the hand of their preſident, James Warren. To this gentleman, general Waſhington brought letters of importance, and to him he was referred for advice by the delegates of the Maſſachuſetts, as "a judicious, confidential friend, who would "never deceive him."

In his reply to this addreſs, general Waſhington obſerved, "That in leaving the enjoyments "of domeſtic life, he had only emulated the "virtue and public ſpirit of the whole province "of Maſſachuſetts Bay; who with a firmneſs "and patriotiſm without example in hiſtory, "had ſacrificed the comforts of ſocial and pri-"vate felicity, in ſupport of the rights of man-"kind, and the welfare of their country." Indeed all ranks were emulous to manifeſt their reſpect to the commander of the army. Multi-

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tudes flocked from every quarter to the American ſtandard, and within a few weeks the environs of Boſton exhibited a brave and high ſpirited army, which formed to order, diſcipline, and ſubordination, more rapidly than could have been expected from their former habits. Fired with an enthuſiaſm ariſing from a ſenſe of the juſtice of their cauſe; ardent, healthy, and vigorous; they were eager for action, and impatient to be led to an attack on the town of Boſton, where the Britiſh army was encamped. But they were ſtill ignorant that both private and political adventurers, had been ſo negligent of their own and the public ſafety, as to pay little attention to the importation of powder, arms, and other warlike ſtores, previous to the prohibition of Britain, reſtricting the ſhipment of thoſe articles to America, but for the immediate uſe of the king's troops.

Thus when hoſtilities commenced, and a war was denounced againſt the colonies, they had innumerable difficulties to ſurmount. Several of the moſt formidable powers of Europe had been invited by Britain to aid the cruel purpoſes of adminiſtration, either by the loan of auxiliaries, or by a refuſal of ſupplies to the infant ſtates, now ſtruggling alone againſt a foe, whoſe power, pride and ſucceſs, had often made the nations tremble. On a retroſpect of the critical ſituation of America, it is aſtoniſhing ſhe did not fall at the threſhold; ſhe had new

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governments to erect in the ſeveral ſtates, her legiſlatures to form, and her civil police to regulate on untrodden ground. She had her armies to eſtabliſh, and funds to provide for their payment: ſhe had her alliances to negociate, new ſources of trade to ſtrike out, and a navy to begin, while the thunder of Britain was alarming her coaſts, the ſavages threatening her borders, and the troops of George the third, with the ſword uplifted, puſhing their execrable purpoſe to exterminate the laſt veſtige of freedom.

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But as Providence had led to the period of independence, the powers of induſtry and invention were called forth. Not diſcouraged by the magnitude of the work, or the numberleſs obſtacles to the completion of their deſign, no difficulties damped the ardor and unanimity of their exertions, though for a time it appeared, as if their magazines muſt be furniſhed by the nitre from heaven, and the ore dug by their own hands from the bowels of the earth. The manufacture of ſalt-petre, at firſt conſidered as the ideal project of ſome enthuſiaſt for freedom, was not only attempted, but became the eaſy occupation of women and children. Large quantities were furniſhed from many parts of America, and powder-mills were erected, which worked it with ſucceſs. Sulphur, lead, and iron ore, are the natural productions of the country, and mountains of flint had recently

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been discovered and wrought for use. As nature had thus furnished the materials, every hand that was not engaged in arms was employed in arts, with an alacrity and cheerfulness that discovered a determination to be free. Precipitated into a conflict that probably might light half Europe in flames, the demand was too great, and the process too slow, to rely entirely on the efforts of genius and industry.

When general Washington became fully apprized of the astonishing deficiency in the article of powder, having been led into a misapprehension of the stock on hand, by irregular returns, his embarrassment was great; he immediately applied for advice to the speaker of the house of representatives, who judged that the most prompt measures were indispensably necessary. They agreed that the speaker should communicate the circumstance to a few members who might be confidentially entrusted: the result was, that committees were immediately sent by the assembly to many towns in the province, in a cautious, guarded manner, to require the stocks of powder on hand in their several magazines. This was expeditiously effected, and with little difficulty; but the collection was very inadequate, yet sufficient to relieve the anxiety of the present moment. Happily they were not apprized within the walls of Boston, of the poverty of their antagonists without, particularly in this article, until they had time

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to collect the ſmall ſtocks from the neighbouring towns, and to receive ſome, though far from an ample ſupply, from the ſouthern colonies. At this criſis, had general Gage ventured without his entrenchments, both the American army and the people, muſt have been involved in extreme diſtreſs.

Several veſſels had been privately ſent both to the Dutch and Engliſh iſlands to procure arms and ammunition; but ſo narrowly were they watched by the Britiſh cruiſers, that they had returned with little ſucceſs.

Theſe circumſtances accelerated a ſpirited meaſure, before contemplated only by a few; the arming and equipping of ſhips to cruize on Britiſh property, was a bold attempt, that ſtartled the apprehenſions of many, zealouſly oppoſed to the undue exerciſe of Britiſh power; but neceſſity impelled, and the enterprize was purſued. The general aſſembly of the Maſſachuſetts ſoon reſolved to build, equip and arm, a number of veſſels ſuitable for the purpoſe, to cruize and capture any Britiſh ſhips that might be found on, or near their coaſts. They granted letters of marque and repriſal to ſeveral adventurers, and appointed courts of admiralty for the trial and condemnation of any captures within thoſe limits. By theſe means, the ſeaſonable capture, in the beginning of this enterpriſe, of a Britiſh ſhip, laden with ordnance, and an aſſorted cargo of warlike ſtores, ſuffi-

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ciently ſupplied the exigencies of the army, and diſſipated the fears of thoſe, who had ſuffered the moſt painful apprehenſions for the ſafety of their country.

Theſe naval preparations may perhaps be ſaid, not to have been merely of a defenſive nature, the line yet avowedly obſerved by the Americans; but they had advanced too far to recede; ſophiſtical diſtinctions of words, or names, were laid aſide. It is a fact, of which every one is ſenſible, that ſucceſsful oppoſition to arbitrary ſway, places a civic crown on the head of the hero that reſiſts; when contingencies that defeat confer an hempen cord inſtead of a wreath of laurel. The ſucceſs and cataſtrophe of the infant navy of America, will be ſhewn in the ſucceeding pages.

The naked ſtate of the magazines had been kept as ſecret as poſſible, and every preparation for attack or defence, had been made, as if no deficiency was felt, while there were not three rounds of powder in the American camp. Lines of circumvallation had been formed from Myſtick river to Roxbury and Dorcheſter. But, notwithſtanding the appearance of ſtrength, the collection of numbers, and the hoſtile diſpoſition of both parties, nothing of conſequence was attempted by either, after the action of the ſeventeenth of June, during the remainder of Gage's

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adminiſtration. This inactivity was heavily cenſured by the more ardent ſpirits both within and without the camp; it was thought diſgraceful on the one ſide, nor would it have been leſs diſhonorable on the other, had not their inability from the cauſes juſt mentioned prevented more vigorous movements. Yet, from the circumſtances of the colonies, their petition to the king ſtill pending, and their allegiance not formally renounced, it was judged by many, moſt prudent for the American army, to remain for the preſent only on the defenſive.

Governor Gage obtained leave to repair to England in the autumn of one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-five. It was indeed unfortunate for him, that he had been appointed to the command of an army and the government of a province, without the talents that qualified for the times. He was naturally a man of a humane diſpoſition, nor had his courage ever been impeached; but he had not the intrigue of the ſtateſman to balance the parties, nor the ſagacity neceſſary to defeat their deſigns; nor was he poſſeſſed of that ſoldierly promptitude that leaves no interval between the determination and the execution of his projects. Glad to quit the thorny field, he bade adieu to a country he had not the ability, and perhaps not the inclination to ſubdue, and the command of the army devolved on Sir William Howe.

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General Oglethorpe, his ſenior in office, an experienced veteran, grown old in military *fame* without ſullying his laurels, had the prior offer of this command. He agreed to accept the appointment on condition the miniſtry would authorize him to aſſure the colonies, that juſtice ſhould be done them. His propoſal at once appeared the reſult of humanity and equity; he declared, that "he knew the peo-"ple of America well; that they never would "be ſubdued by arms, but that their obedi-"ence would be ever ſecured by doing them "juſtice."* A man with theſe ideas was not a fit inſtrument for the deſigns of the Britiſh government: he was therefore, agreeable to his own requeſt, permitted to remain at home, where he was a quiet ſpectator of the folly of his country through a ſeven years war with the colonies.† On his declining the appointment, the important and hazardous command was given to general Howe, a man of pleaſure and a ſoldier; but the predominancy of the

* Britiſh Annual Regiſter.

† General Oglethorpe had been diſtinguiſhed for the benevolence of his diſpoſition through all his tranſactions in America, where he had reſided ſeveral years. His mildneſs and equity towards the natives in the early ſettlement of the ſtate of Georgia, and his conduct both in a civil and military capacity, had won the eſteem and affection of the inhabitants of the ſouthern colonies, the approbation of his ſovereign, and the applauſe of his native country. Modern Univerſal Hiſtory, vol. xx.

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firſt trait in his character often interfered with the vigour and deciſion neceſſary to complete the laſt. Early on his promotion, his ſeverity and indiſcretion eraſed the favorable impreſſion which many in America yet cheriſhed for his name and family.

In the beginning of his adminiſtration, he publiſhed a proclamation condemning to military execution any of the remaining inhabitants of Boſton, who ſhould attempt to leave the town; he compelled them to form themſelves into bodies under officers he ſhould appoint, and to take arms in caſe of an attack, againſt their brethren in the country. Yet for a certain ſum of money, he promiſed an exemption from the cruel taſk of imbruing their hands in the blood of their friends. But the moſt memorable event that took place, while he preſided in the province, previous to the evacuation of Boſton, was the cannonade and deſtruction of Falmouth, a flouriſhing and well-built town in the eaſtern parts of the Maſſachuſetts.

Alarm and depredation had ſpread from ſhore to ſhore through all the ſea coaſts of America; their ſhipping were ſeized, their iſlands plundered, their harbors infeſted by the landing of marauding parties, and many places threatened with immediate conflagration. Briſtol, near Rhode Iſland, had been attacked in a dark

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ſtormy night, and an hundred and twenty cannon fired on that defenceleſs town within an hour. Many houſes were injured, and ſome ſet on fire; a remarkable ſickneſs had raged in the town for ſome time, and the languiſhing inhabitants were now hurried into the ſtreets in their beds, to preſerve them from immediate death in the conflagration of their houſes.* This was an uncivil mode of demanding a tax of cattle, ſheep, and hogs, for the ſupply of the ſquadron of captain (afterwards) Sir James Wallace, who had for many months haraſſed and diſtreſſed the ſtate of Rhode Iſland.

This rude attack upon Briſtol, took place only eight days previous to the wanton deſolation which on the eve of winter ſtripped the inhabitants of Falmouth, both of ſhelter and proviſions, and drove them naked into the wilderneſs, uncertain of any accommodations to ſecure them from the inclemency of the ſeaſon. One captain Mowatt, who had recently been a priſoner there, and had received the moſt hoſpitable treatment from the inhabitants, was the inſtrument to execute this deed of unprovoked barbarity. It is true he notified the town, that "he would give them two hours

* The Rev. Mr. Burt, diſtinguiſhed for his piety, benevolence, and attachment to the liberties of his country, was found dead in a field the morning after the conflagration. He had fled from his bed where he was confined by ſickneſs, to eſcape the flames that conſumed his houſe.

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" to remove the *human ſpecies*, at the period of " which term, a red pendant would be hoiſted " at the main-top-gallant-maſt head, and that " on the leaſt reſiſtance he ſhould be freed from " all humanity dictated by his orders or his in- " clination."*

Three gentlemen repaired on board his ſhip to inquire the reaſon of this extraordinary ſummons. Mowatt replied, that " he had orders " to ſet on fire all the ſea-port towns from Boſ- " ton to Halifax, and that he ſuppoſed New- " York was already in aſhes." He ſaid, " he " could diſpenſe with his orders on no terms " but the compliance of the inhabitants to de- " liver up their arms and ammunition, and their " ſending on board a ſupply of proviſions, four " carriage-guns, and the ſame number of the " principal perſons in the town, as hoſtages, that " they ſhould engage not to unite with their " country in any kind of oppoſition to Bri- " tain." He aſſured them that on a refuſal of theſe conditions, he ſhould lay the town in aſhes within three hours.

Unprepared for ſuch an attack, and intimidated by the roar of cannon, which began to play on the town, the people ſupplicated a ſuſpenſion till the morning before they replied to the humiliating propoſal. They improved the

* The above is an exact copy of Mowatt's letter. See Britiſh Remembrancer.

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ſhort reprieve which with difficulty they obtained, in removing their families and effects; after which they made no further reſiſtance, not even to the marines who landed with lighted torches to make the devaſtation complete. In this defenceleſs ſituation, the inhabitants conſidered oppoſition only as a uſeleſs waſte of human life, and many of them ſtood on the heights, the paſſive ſpectators of the fire that played on the town through the day. They beheld with various emotions, a conflagration that reduced many of them to penury and deſpair; thus, were they prepared for the occupation of ſoldiers, and driven to the field from the double motive of reſentment and the neceſſity of immediate ſubſiſtence.

New York, Stonington, Newport, and many other places were threatened, but did not experience a ſimilar fate. The laſt, ſituated on an iſland, was obliged to ſtipulate for a weekly ſupply, to ſave their town from the fury of the piratical corſairs that ſurrounded them, who proudly boaſted of the civility and generoſity of their nation. England has indeed been long celebrated for magnanimity, clemency, and humanity; but it is with nations as with individuals, when human nature falls from virtue, it generally ſinks into the extremes of vice, in proportion as it was before conſpicuous for ſuperior excellence.

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Thus, the monarch diveſted of compaſſion, and the miniſtry of principle, the naval ſtrength of Britain, the miſtreſs of the ſeas, and the terror of Europe, was employed to interrupt the commerce, lay waſte the cities, deſtroy the towns, and plunge the inhabitants of America in miſery and deſpair; forgetful that ſhe was ever contributing by the acquiſitions of her induſtry to the ſtrength of Britain. Nor was America yet ſufficiently irritated, to renounce her allegiance to the king, or relinquiſh her connexion with England, cemented by the ſtrong ties of habit and conſanguinity, language, religion, and manners. Yet, though there was no formal diſſolution of the legal bands that that had united them, the frequent outrages experienced by Americans, convinced them of the neceſſity of ſome effectual naval preparations on their part. This was ſo obvious, that Congreſs no longer delayed acting with deciſion on a meaſure that had been balanced by various opinions. They directed general Waſhington to contract for a number of armed veſſels to cruiſe abroad, to defend the ſea coaſts at home, and as far as it was practicable, to capture Britiſh property wherever it might be found.

Many gentlemen, ſanguine in opinion, that an American navy was no *Utopian* project, but that her marine might rapidly riſe to a reſpectable height, engaged with an energy that ſel-

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dom fails of carrying into execution any attempt the human mind, on principles of reaſon, is capable of forming. They accordingly built on the large rivers from Portſmouth to Pennſylvania, a number of veſſels, row-gallies, and frigates, from four to forty guns; fitted, manned, and completely equipped them for ſea in the courſe of a few months. All encouragement was given both to public and private adventurers who engaged in the ſea ſervice; ſucceſs was equal to expectation; many very valuable prizes, and a vaſt number of proviſion veſſels from England, Ireland, and Nova Scotia, were captured, and by this means the Americans were ſoon ſupplied, not only with the neceſſaries for war, but with the conveniences and the luxuries of life.

While things remained in this ſituation in Boſton, and along the Atlantic ſhore, a very buſy and important ſcene was acting in another quarter of America. The conqueſt of Quebec by the immortal *Wolfe*, in conjunction with the bold and hardy New Englanders, is a ſtory well known in the annals of Britain. On the peace concluded with France at Fontainbleau, in the duke of Bedford's adminiſtration, the whole province of Canada was ceded to the crown of England, in lieu of more valuable acquiſitions relinquiſhed to France. Moſt of the inhabitants of the country were French, ſome of them nobleſſe, and all of them attached to their former

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maſter. The Roman Catholic faith was the eſtabliſhed religion of the country, yet the Canadians were in all reſpects to be governed according to the laws of England, until the Quebec bill, the ſubject of much political diſunion in England, paſſed into an act, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-four. This act cut the Canadians off from the privileges of Engliſh ſubjects, denied them an aſſembly of their own on the principles of the Britiſh conſtitution, deprived them of the trial by jury in civil proceſſes; the laws of France were reſtored, and the boundaries of the province were extended far beyond the juſt limits: the Roman Catholic religion alſo was not only to be tolerated, but was eſtabliſhed by act of parliament. This was very offenſive both to the French and the Engliſh inhabitants, who found their intereſts inſeparably connected. Theſe new regulations were made with a view of fixing the Canadians more firmly in the intereſt of the miniſtry; but as they had taſted the advantages of a leſs deſpotic government, the people in general had adopted more liberal modes of thinking, both in civil and religious matters; and moſt of the inhabitants were equally diſſatisfied with the late parliamentary regulations.

The Quebec act, unpopular in England, and alarming in America, was particularly diſguſting to all the Engliſh ſettlers in Canada, ex-

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cept a few individuals employed by the crown. Neither the authority of adminiſtration, nor the addreſs of governor Carleton, was ſufficient to quiet the diſorders that aroſe, or to induce the Canadians in this early ſtage of the diſpute, to take arms to aſſiſt in the ſubjugation of the other colonies. They murmured loudly at the meaſures of the Britiſh government; they refuſed peremptorily to act againſt the United States, and ſeveral of the principal Engliſh inhabitants correſponded with ſome of the members of Congreſs, and encouraged the meaſures that were taken to bring the province of Canada into an union with the thirteen colonies.

Thus it required no ſmall intrigue to inſtigate even the ſavages who delight in blood, to the commiſſion of unprovoked hoſtilities, which would interrupt the traffic carried on between them and the frontiers of the other provinces. It has been juſtly obſerved, "that the introduc-"tion of barbarians and ſavages into the con-"teſts of civilized nations, is a meaſure preg-"nant with ſhame and miſchief, which the "intereſt of a moment may impel, but which "is reprobated by the beſt principles of hu-"manity and reaſon."* But theſe were not the principles on which the American war was conducted. Congreſs had authentic information, that every method was uſed to induce the ſavages

* Gibbon on the decline and fall of the Roman empire.

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to take up the hatchet againſt the Americans. Several conferences had been held the preceding ſummer, with many of their chiefs aſſembled at Montreal. This was in conſequence of the machinations of colonel Johnſon, a famous Indian partiſan in the laſt war, whoſe influence among them was very extenſive. In theſe conferences he gave each of them a war belt and a tomahawk; invited them to drink the blood, and feaſt on the body of a *Boſtonian*, and to ſing the war-ſong over a roaſted bullock and a pipe of wine he had prepared for the purpoſe; but ſeveral of them declined either to eat, drink, or ſing the barbarous ſong. They afterwards delivered up the black belt with the hatchet depictured thereon, to ſome of the American officers.*

Theſe tranſactions were conſidered as inconteſtable proof, that adminiſtration was determined to employ as their allies, the fierce and numerous *hordes* of the wilderneſs, to ſubdue and butcher the Americans, even before they had thrown off their allegiance to the crown of Britain. It had alſo been recently diſcovered, that governor Carleton had received a commiſſion, authorizing him to muſter and arm all perſons reſiding within the province of Canada, and, "as occaſion ſhould require, to march and em-"bark the levies to any of the provinces of

* General Schuyler's letter, Dec. 14th, 1775, publiſhed by order of congreſs.

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"America, to purſue and proſecute either by "ſea or land, all enemies, pirates, or rebels, "either in or out of the province; and if it "ſhould ſo pleaſe God, them to vanquiſh, to "take, and ſo apprehended, according to law, "them to put to death, or to preſerve alive, at "his diſcretion."*

A detail of the ſufferings of one family will evince the wretched ſituation of all in that province who had the courage to complain of the meaſures of adminiſtration, or indulged a favorable opinion of the exertions of the other colonies. The ſingular mode of bending the minds of men of liberal opinions to the deſigns of government, was firſt experimented on Mr. Walker, an Engliſh gentleman of fortune and abilities, who had been many years a reſident at Montreal. His avowed diſlike of the Quebec bill, drew on him the reſentment of the officers of government, and involved him in altercation and danger. He had, in anſwer to the ſervile maxim—"*Qui le roi, eſt maitre*"—repeated by one Rouvelle, coolly replied, that "with regard "to monſieur Rouvelle, it might be ſo, as he "ate his majeſty's bread;" but added, "I deny "that the king is *my maſter*: I reſpect him as "my lawful ſovereign, and am ready to pay

* The whole of general Carleton's extraordinary commiſſion may be ſeen in the parliamentary regiſter of Nov. 2d, in the ſecond ſeſſions of the then parliament.

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"due obedience to his lawful commands; but "I cannot acknowlege any one as *my maſter* "while I live by my own induſtry; when I re- "ceive pay from the king, perhaps my ac- "knowledgments may be equally ſubmiſſive." Rouvelle immediately informed general Carleton of this converſation; his prudence was commended, and he was ſoon after appointed one of the judges of the ſupreme court at Montreal. This appointment was equally aſtoniſhing to the French inhabitants, as it was diſguſting to the Engliſh. Men of all deſcriptions had a very ill opinion of Rouvelle. The recent converſation between him and Mr. Walker was miſrepreſented and exaggerated. The partiſans of the crown and the officers of the army were highly exaſperated againſt him; and ſoon after, reſentment was carried ſo far as to attempt the aſſaſſination of Mr. Walker.

A number of ſoldiers under the command of a captain Diſney, entered his houſe in the evening, when at ſupper with a few friends. On a ſudden noiſe at the door of the hall, Mrs. Walker imagined it to be ſome Canadians, who had been the preceding day on buſineſs with Mr. Walker, as an officer of juſtice. Without any heſitation ſhe pronounced *entrez;* but to her inexpreſſible ſurpriſe, the next moment ſhe ſaw through the glaſſes of the inner door, a number of faces, ſome of them blacked, others covered with a vizard of crape, all riſing on the ſteps, and ruſhing with

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precipitation into the room: in an agony of ſurpriſe ſhe exclaimed, "Good God, this is "murder!" Mr. Walker ſat with his back to the door, and before he had time to riſe, he received from one of the ruffians, a violent ſtroke of a broad ſword on his head; he attempted to recover his arms and defend himſelf, but wounded in a moſt cruel manner, he ſunk motionleſs on the floor, when one of the villains kneeled on his breaſt, and cut off his right ear, while he ſo far retained his ſenſes as to hear one of them ſay, "damn him, he is dead."

After recovering from his wounds, he commenced a civil proceſs againſt Diſney and his party. The crime was proved with all its atrocious aggravations, but juſtice had not its operation, either in compenſation to the ſufferer, or puniſhment of the guilty. Mr. Walker finding himſelf unſafe in the city, retired to his country-houſe, determined to amuſe himſelf with his books and his farm, without farther attention to political or public ſcenes; but his perſecution was not at an end; he had not long reſided in his villa, before he was moleſted in a ſtill more barbarous manner.

A party of thirty ſoldiers was ſent by governor Carleton, to bring him dead or alive to Quebec. They ſurrounded his houſe juſt before day, and ſummoned him to ſurrender. Inſtead of a compliance, he courageouſly endea-

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voured to defend himſelf and his family, until the party without ſet fire to his houſe in ſeveral places, when he was obliged to eſcape the flames by throwing himſelf from the third ſtory. In the fall from a window of ſuch a height, one of his legs was broken, which left him to the mercy of his antagoniſts, who made him their priſoner, and conducted him to Quebec, where he was loaded with irons, denied the uſe of pen, ink, and paper, and forbidden even the light of a taper in his darkſome cell.

Mrs. Walker, a lady of great elegance and ſenſibility, had in the terror of the night, leaped from a ſecond ſtory window, and walked through the ſnow till exhauſted by fear and fatigue, ſhe was overtaken by one of the party, who had the compaſſion to throw his cloak over her, and conduct her to a neighbouring houſe. She ſoon after made her eſcape from that part of the country over the lakes, accompanied by the commiſſioners, congreſs had ſome time before ſent on, to confer with and ſecure the intereſt of the Canadians. The boat in which ſhe croſſed one of thoſe inland ſeas, paſſed another almoſt within call, which conveyed her huſband a priſoner to Quebec.

It has already been obſerved, that an addreſs had been ſent by Congreſs to the inhabitants of Canada, couched in nervous, friendly and pathetic terms, reminding them of their com-

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mon danger, and urging them to a union with the other colonies in defence of their common rights. But the mixture of French, Britiſh, American, and ſavage inhabitants of that country, rendered it very uncertain how far the other colonies might depend on the aid or friendſhip of the Canadians. Congreſs apprized of the ſituation of affairs there, judged it prudent to endeavour to engage the people of all deſcriptions in that quarter, more firmly to the intereſt of the union. It was thought a favorable criſis for this purpoſe, when the flower of the Britiſh troops then in America, were ſhut up in Boſton; and when the governors of the ſouthern provinces, interrupted in their negociations with the Indians, had taken refuge on board the king's ſhips, either from real or imagined perſonal danger. This was an important buſineſs, as whoever poſſeſſes Canada will in a great meaſure command the numerous tribes beyond the lakes. A reſpectable delegation was ſent to Montreal, to treat with the white inhabitants, and as far as poſſible to conciliate or ſecure the copper-colored nations.

The importance of poſſeſſing Canada, ſtrongly impreſſed the minds at this time, of gentlemen of the firſt penetration. A very reſpectable committee was ſent by congreſs into the country, with Dr. Franklin at the head of the miſſion; whoſe talents as a ſtateſman, perfect knowledge of the French language, extenſive

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literary acquaintance with that nation, urbanity of manners, courteous deportment, united with a prudent reſerve, marked him as a ſuitable character to negociate with, and endeavour to attach the Canadians of all deſcriptions to the American union. Mr. Carrol of Maryland, a clergyman of the Roman Catholic profeſſion, was ſent on with the delegation, to adminiſter the ordinances of religion, baptiſm, abſolution, &c., which they had been denied for ſome time by their clergy under Britiſh influence; who, inſtead of beſtowing the bleſſings of the church, had denounced their anathemas, to the great grievance of many tender conſciences, and threatened the vengeance of heaven, as well as earth, on failure of due ſubmiſſion to parliamentary mandates.

Theſe efforts to engage and fix the Canadians to a certain point failed; the committee returned with little ſucceſs. Words and profeſſions are of little avail when the ſword is, or is about to be, lifted for deciſion. Congreſs now found that a force ſufficient to ſtrengthen the hands of their friends in that province, was the only mode to be relied on. In conſequence of this neceſſity, they directed two regiments of New York militia, and a body of New Englanders, conſiſting in the whole of about three thouſand men, to proceed under the command of the generals Schuyler and Montgomery, by the lake

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Champlain to the river Sorel, which empties itſelf into the St. Lawrence, and immediately attempt the reduction of Quebec. They arrived at the *Iſle Noix*, which lies at the entrance of that river, in the autumn of one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-five.

The commander there publiſhed a declaration announcing the reaſons of this movement, and inviting the inhabitants of every deſcription to arrange themſelves under the banners of liberty, and unite in the common cauſe of America. After this, they immediately puſhed on through woods, ſwamps, and moraſſes, to a fort about twelve miles diſtance: here, an unexpected attack from a large body of Indians, obliged them to retreat to their former poſt, and wait the arrival of reinforcements.

On this retreat to the *Iſle Noix*, general Schuyler immediately returned to Albany; the oſtenſible reaſon was, the broken ſtate of his health, which indeed was ſo impaired, as to render him unfit for the fatigue of ſuch a ſervice. Thus the whole weight of the war in that quarter, was left to the intrepid Montgomery; who though qualified by his courage, capacity, and military experience, was not in force ſufficient for ſo great an undertaking. He, however, notwithſtanding the vigilance of general Carleton, made himſelf maſter of the forts of Chamblee and St. John's, and with various other ſucceſſes

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arrived at Montreal, about the middle of November. General Carleton had arrived there ſome time before, and had made every exertion for the preſervation of all the poſts in the neighbourhood, as well as thoſe above mentioned; but the people diſaffected, and his army weak, his efforts were blaſted, and he thought himſelf happy to eſcape the vigilance of Montgomery; who had placed guards at every poſt for his interception: he, however, in a dark night, in an open boat, fortunately paſſed them all, and arrived at Quebec in ſafety.

When general Montgomery arrived at Montreal, the inhabitants, both French and Engliſh, wiſhed to ſurrender by capitulation; but with a ſpirit and dignity conſiſtent with his uſual character, he refuſed this, though at the ſame time he gave them the ſtrongeſt aſſurances of juſtice, ſecurity, and perſonal ſafety. He pledged his honor for their peaceable poſſeſſion of their property, and the free exerciſe of their religion: he expreſſed in liberal terms, his diſpoſition to protect the inhabitants on the ſame footing with the other American colonies. He then demanded the poſſeſſion of the gates, and the keys of all the public ſtores, and ordered them to be delivered by nine o'clock the enſuing morning. Accordingly the gates were thrown open, and his troops entered at the appointed hour: thus without the ſmalleſt reſiſtance, he took poſſeſſion of this important poſt. He treated every

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claſs of inhabitants with that lenity and politeneſs, which at once attached them to his perſon, ſtrengthened their prejudices againſt the Britiſh government, and cheriſhed the favorable ideas many had before imbibed, both of the Americans, and the cauſe in which they were engaged.

When Montgomery had made all proper arrangements for the ſecurity and peace of Montreal, he prepared immediately to go forward and inveſt Quebec, then in a weak, defenceleſs condition, their governor abſent, the inhabitants diſaffected, and but an handful of troops in the garriſon. When general Carleton left the neighbourhood of Montreal, he made the utmoſt diſpatch to reach and put the capital of Canada in a proper ſtate of defence; but he found Quebec in the greateſt conſternation and danger, from a quarter not apprehended, and ſcarcely conceived poſſible, from the novelty and hazard of the undertaking.

A detachment of upwards of one thouſand men had been marched from the army near Boſton. The command of this little band had been given to colonel Arnold, a young ſoldier of fortune, who held in equal contempt both danger and principle. They took paſſage at Merrimack, and arrived at the mouth of the Kennebeck on the twenty-ſecond of September. There, finding it probable their proviſions

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might fall ſhort, when there could be no poſſibility of a freſh ſupply, Arnold ſent back three hundred of his men.* Moſt of the remainder embarked in batteaux prepared for the purpoſe: a ſmall diviſion of the troops marched ſlowly, and kept the banks of the river.

They encamped together every night, though frequently interrupted in their progreſs, by rocks, falls, rapids, and carrying-places, where they were obliged to carry their boats for ſeveral miles together on their ſhoulders. With incredible perſeverance, they traverſed woods, mountains, ſwamps, and precipices, and were obliged alternately to cut their way where no human foot had trodden, to ford ſhallows, or attempt the navigation of a rapid ſtream, with a rocky bottom, which ſeemed not deſigned as a paſſage for any human being to attempt. At the ſame time their proviſions were ſo reduced, that they were obliged to eat their own dogs, and convert their ſhoe-leather into food.

But with aſtoniſhing reſolution, they ſurmounted every obſtacle, and near two thirds of the detachment completed a *route* of ſeveral hundred miles, through an hideous wilderneſs, unexplored before but by the beaſts and ſavages of the foreſt. It was at the time thought, that if the hiſtorian did juſtice to the heroic firmneſs

* Theſe appeared ready to deſert with a field officer at their head, if they had not been permitted to return.

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of this little party, that it would be as honorable a teſtimony of the exertions of human intrepidity, as the celebrated march of the renowned Hannibal: but the enterpriſing ſpirit of America has ſince taught her ſons to tread over a track of the forlorn deſert ſo much more extenſive, that this now appears but an epitome of their hardihood.

Colonel Arnold with his little army almoſt exhauſted by hunger and fatigue, reached the Canadian ſettlements on the third of November. He was received in a friendly manner, and a liberal ſupply of proviſions was collected for his relief. By the alacrity of the inhabitants, he was in a few days furniſhed with boats to croſs the St. Lawrence, and by favor of the night he effected his paſſage, in ſpite of the vigilance of ſeveral frigates that lay in the river. When he ſat down before Quebec, he found all the batteries manned from the ſhipping; but having no artillery, he could do little more than parade before the city, and wait the arrival of general Montgomery.

In the mean time, general Carleton was not idle; every preparation that courage or vigilance could dictate, was made for the reception of Montgomery. He ordered by proclamation, all who refuſed to take arms, immediately to quit the city with their wives and children, on peril of being treated with the utmoſt ſeverity,

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as rebels and traitors to their king. Many of them obeyed, and abandoned their reſidence and property. The Scotch inhabitants and the French *nobleſſe*, he could at that time firmly rely on; all others, diſguſted with the Quebec act, and alienated by the ſeverity of the governor, were in a temper to renounce their loyalty, and join the Americans. Yet the fear of loſing their property in the confuſion that might enſue, if the city was obliged to change its maſters, operated on ſome, and cauſed them to arm, though with great reluctance. The conſideration of pecuniary loſſes will always have a powerful influence on the minds of men: thus, the zeal which had been nurtured for the defence of liberty, ſoon began to abate; and both Engliſh and Canadians, actuated by the principle of immediate ſelf-intereſt, concealed their former defection to the Britiſh government. Many of them were wealthy and opulent, and became daily more diſpoſed to unite in defence of the town, which contained more families in opulent circumſtances, than all the province beſides.

After placing a garriſon in Montreal, new clothing his troops, and ſtationing ſome ſmall detachments in the out-poſts in the neighbourhood, general Montgomery ſent a few troops to different parts of the province, to expedite farther ſupplies of proviſions, clothing, and other neceſſaries. He then puſhed on his march beneath the fall of ſnows, embarraſſed

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with bad roads, a ſevere winter, an inhoſpitable climate, and the murmur of his little army. The term of their enliſtment was nearly expired; nothing kept them together but their attachment to their commander, and that zeal in the public cauſe, which had already prompted them to encounter perils and endure hardſhips, which the human conſtitution ſeems not calculated to ſurmount, after being ſoftened by the habits of civilized life. But by the addreſs of the commander, and the reſolution of the troops, they with incredible expedition arrived at Quebec, notwithſtanding the impediments that lay in their way.

The ſoldiers in garriſon, with the marines from the king's frigates, that had been placed therein, and the armed militia, both French and Engliſh, did not amount to more than two thouſand men when the army arrived from Montreal; but by the intrepidity of general Carleton, and the activity of his officers, they had prepared for defence with the ſpirit of veterans. They rejected with diſdain a ſummons from Montgomery to ſurrender the town, to prevent the fatal conſequences of its being taken by ſtorm; fired on the flag that offered to convey letters with propoſals for capitulation, obliged it to retire, and all communication was forbidden by the inflexible Carleton.

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General Montgomery after this, ſent a ſecond letter* by colonel Arnold and Mr. Macpherſon, his aid-de-camp, to general Carleton. He upbraided him with perſonal ill-treatment, with the cruelty exerciſed towards the priſoners that had fallen into his hands, and with the unparallelled conduct, except among ſavages, of firing at a flag of truce. He warned him not to deſtroy either public or private ſtores, as he had done at Montreal, and kept up a tone of ſuperiority as if ſure of ſucceſs. The meſſengers reached the walls of Quebec, but were ordered to decamp with ſpeed, and informed that the governor would receive no letters or hold any intercourſe with rebels.

Thus circumſtanced, general Montgomery judged that immediate and decided action, was the only means of ſerving his country, and ſecuring to himſelf that renown, which the luſtre of his former conduct had acquired. Thus, depending too much on his own good fortune, and too little acquainted with the arrangement and vigor within the walls, he reſolved on the dangerous and deſperate meaſure of an effort to take the city by *eſcalade*. He made his diſpoſitions accordingly, and under the cover of a violent ſnow-ſtorm, his army in four ſeparate divi-

* See general Montgomery's letter, December 6, 1775. Appendix, Note No. XV.

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ſions, began the arduous work at the ſame moment, early on the morning of the thirty-firſt of December.

But the enemy had gained intelligence of his movements, the alarm had been given, and a ſignal made for a general engagement in the lower town, ſome time before Montgomery had reached it. He however puſhed on through a narrow paſſage, with a hanging rock on the one ſide, and a dangerous precipice of the banks of the river on the other, and with a reſolution becoming his character, he gained the firſt barrier. Warmed with the ſpirit of magnanimity and a thirſt for glory, the inſeparable companions of exalted minds, he met undaunted the fire of his enemies, and accompanied by ſome of his braveſt officers, he ruſhed on to attack a well-defended barricade. But to the regret of the army, the grief of his country, and the inexpreſſible ſorrow of his numerous friends, the valiant Montgomery, with the laurels freſh blooming on his brow, fell at the gates by a random ſhot from the frozen walls of Quebec.

Connected with one of the firſt families in New York,* happy in the higheſt enjoyment of domeſtic felicity, he was led by principle to quit the occupations of rural life; and animated with an ardent zeal for the cauſe of human nature, the liberties of mankind, and the glory of Amer-

* He married a daughter of judge Livingſton.

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ica, both his active life, and his heroic death, verified his last expression to his amiable lady.... "*You shall never blush for your Montgomery.*"* CHAP. VII. 1775.

His philosophic taste, his pleasing manners, his private virtues, and his military abilities, were acknowledged and revered even by his enemies, who cannot but pronounce the Canadian fields are marked with peculiar glory. It is there the choicest flowers of fame may be culled to crown the memory of a Wolfe and a Montgomery. Yet, while one of those illustrious names, written in characters of blood, reflects lustre on the glory of a British monarch, the other will announce to posterity, the efforts of virtue to resist the tyranny of his successor.

General Montgomery was justly considered as an early martyr in the cause of freedom, and the premature stroke that robbed his country of an officer of tried bravery and decided merit, was not only bewailed by his friends, but excited the tear of generous compassion from all those who were susceptible of the nobler feelings of the soul, among such as were opposed to him in political opinion. The animosities of war, and the enmities created by different sentiments, or rivalry in fame, should ever expire with the life of a hero. Yet the obsequies of this great

* The writer of these annals had the particulars of his last adieu, in a letter from his lady immediately after his death.

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and amiable man, were not attended with thoſe honorary marks of reſpect, uſually paid to illuſtrious military characters, when victory has ſatiated reſentment: his body was thrown into a ſledge, and without even a coffin, conveyed to the place of burial. The manner of general Montgomery's interment, was at firſt reported much more to the honor of governor Carleton; but the above account is from the teſtimony of ſeveral reſpectable American officers* then in Quebec.* By the perſuaſion of a lady who afterwards married the lieutenant governor of Quebec, who had formerly ſerved in the Britiſh army with general Montgomery, the body of this worthy officer was taken up, and again interred in a rough coffin, but without any particular marks of reſpect. The other officers who fell, were indiſcriminately thrown with their clothes on, into the ſame grave with their ſoldiers.

The death of general Montgomery decided the fate of the day, though colonel Arnold and his party with great bravery kept up the attack; nor did they quit the field until after Arnold was obliged to retire, having received a dangerous wound. Notwithſtanding this accident, added to the unſpeakable loſs of their brave commander, this ſmall reſolute party kept

* Particularly captain, afterwards general, Dearborn; taken priſoner at the attempt on the ſecond barrier.

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their ground, until galled on every ſide, attacked in the rear, and their retreat cut off by a Britiſh party, who found means to ſecure a paſſage that prevented even the attempt, yet they kept up an obſtinate defence for ſeveral hours, but at laſt were obliged to ſurrender themſelves priſoners of war.*

Though the manes of their commander in chief had not been treated with that generoſity which is uſually the reſult of true magnanimity, yet general Carleton treated the priſoners that afterwards fell into his hands, with more humanity; their wounds were dreſſed, their wants relieved, and his own phyſicians ſent to viſit the ſick. He alſo endeavoured to recal thoſe, who, after the defeat, had taken ſhelter in the woods, or ſuch as had been left ſick or wounded on the way, after the retreat; and by proclamation, he promiſed liberty to all the unhappy ſtragglers, when they ſhould be cured of their wounds and diſeaſes.

After the death of Montgomery, the retreat of Arnold, and a ſurrender of a conſiderable

* Moſt of the American officers diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their intrepidity and vigilance on this fated day; but none more than colonel Morgan, who ſeemed to be adapted by nature, by his ſtrength of body, vigor of mind, and unconquerable reſolution, for the ſevere conflicts of war. This was afterwards exemplified in the many rencounters he met in the ravage of the Carolinas.

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part of his troops, the broken forces collected and retired about three miles from the city. There they kept up a kind of blockade through the winter; and by the ſpirit of Arnold, on whom the command had devolved, and the vigilance of his party, they prevented in a great meaſure, additional recruits and ſupplies for the relief of the city. This there was every reaſon to expect would be attempted, not only from the difficulties of their ſituation within the city, but from the fickleneſs of the Canadians without, and their manifeſt diſpoſition to enliſt under the banners of ſucceſs. From their local circumſtances, this change of temper might from the beginning have been apprehended, from thoſe pretended allies of the United States. Their neighbourhood and connexion with the ſavages, their long habit of oſcillating between England and France, and their ignorance in general of the grounds of the diſpute, muſt naturally render their fidelity to the ſtates, under the juriſdiction of Congreſs, very uncertain.

But we leave the lakes, the wilderneſs, the ſavages, and their employers in that quarter, for the preſent, to obſerve for a time, the intereſting movements on the borders of the Atlantic, and the diſpoſition diſcovered by the ancient parent of the colonies, which ſoon produced conſequences of the higheſt moment. It may,

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however, be proper to obſerve here, that general Arnold extricated himſelf in a remarkable manner from his embarraſſments in this quarter; and lived to be conſpicuouſly diſtinguiſhed through the American war, for his bravery and addreſs, his activity, and his villany.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Diſſenſions in the Britiſh Parliament.—Petition of Governor Penn rejected.—Boſton evacuated.—Sir Henry Clinton ſent to the Southward—Followed by General Lee—His Character.—Sir Peter Parker's Attack on Sullivan's Iſland.—General Howe's Arrival at Sandy-Hook.—General Waſhington leaves Cambridge.—Obſervations on the Temper of ſome of the Colonies.

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WHILE as above related, a buſy and important ſcene was exhibited at the northward, the ſouthern colonies were parrying the embarraſſments created by the royal governors, ſome of whom had recently left America. The people were gradually laying aſide the prejudices which mankind generally imbibe for old eſtabliſhed governments, and were preparing themſelves for new modes, if neceſſity ſhould impel, whenever the delegates with whom they had entruſted their rights, ſhould judge affairs fully ripened for a declaration of independence, and a final ſeparation from Britain. The American congreſs was yet waiting the reſult of their late petition to the throne, with a degree of temper and moderation ſcarcely paralleled, among men poſſeſſing the unlimited confidence of their country on the one ſide, and on the other irritated by the neglect and contempt of their oppreſſors, and the rude inſults of miniſterial menace.

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Thus ſuſpended on the wing of expectation, or rather an unfounded and fruitleſs hope, every thing remained quiet at head-quarters, through the winter of one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-ſix. No attempt was made againſt Boſton by the American army, nor did general Howe ſhew any diſpoſition to ſally from the town, and interrupt the tranquillity of the camp. In ſhort, the Britiſh army, engroſſed by the pleaſures of the town, and the exhibition of *farces* compoſed by one of their general officers,* became ſo inactive, and appeared ſo inoffenſive, that the Americans (little leſs diſpoſed to indulge in the pleaſures of peace) enjoyed at Cambridge the conviviality of the ſeaſon. The ladies of the principal American officers repaired to the camp. Harmony and hoſpitality, united with that ſimplicity which had hitherto been characteriſtic of the domeſtic taſte, ſtyle, and manners of the moſt reſpectable Americans, reigned among them for ſeveral months, without the ſmalleſt interruption. Civility and mutual forbearance appeared between the officers of the royal and continental armies, and a frequent interchange of flags was indulged, for the gratification of the different partiſans.

* General Burgoyne, whoſe genius for theſe literary productions was afterwards diſplayed more to his honor.

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But notwithſtanding the reluctance to action, obſervable in two powerful and contiguous armies, the wheels of revolution were rolling on in ſwift progreſſion. The approach of ſpring lowered with the fate of empire, the birth of nations, and the painful convulſions experienced by every ſtate, ſtruggling to retrieve and permanently ſecure the rights of nature, ſeized or curtailed by the ſtrong hand of power.

Through the laſt ten years, the Britiſh miniſtry had been repeatedly changed, and though none of them, except the duke of Grafton and the marquis of Rockingham,* who had figured at the head of adminiſtration, had ſhewn any diſpoſition to do juſtice to America, yet the counſels of the cabinet had been kept in continual fluctuation. From the retirement of lord Bute, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-ſix, there had been an extraordinary variety and ſucceſſion of characters in the colonial department. The lords Grenville, Rockingham, North, Hillſborough, and Dartmouth, had alternately taken the lead in this thorny path: ſeveral others had labored in the road for a time, and retired equally ſucceſsleſs and chagrined; particularly the duke of Grafton.†

* The marquis of Rockingham was through his whole life uniformly oppoſed to the American war.

† The duke of Grafton was very explicit with his majeſty in his reaſons for reſignation.

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From the religious deportment of lord Dartmouth, he had ſecured the partiality of a party; but it ſoon appeared from the inefficacy of his meaſures, and the want of ſtability in his conduct, that he was a very unfit perſon for a place, that required deeper intrigue, more energy, and ſtronger abilities than he poſſeſſed. Tired of the burthen himſelf, and his employers weary of his adminiſtration, he reſigned his office in the ſummer of one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-five.

On his reſignation, lord George Germaine, "the *hero* of *Minden*," entered a field which did not brighten his laurels, though he engaged with a boldneſs and temerity of ſpirit, that he had not on all occaſions diſcovered. Zealous for the honor of his ſovereign, the intereſt and ſuperiority of his nation, the dignity and ſupremacy of parliament, he undertook the conduct of the American war, and the ſubjugation of the colonies, with a temper and reſolution more ſanguine than diſcreet. Early in his adminiſtration, and through the whole courſe of this eventful year, propoſals for an accommodation with the colonies, were offered from various quarters; but conciliation with America, had no place in the ſyſtem of the new miniſter.

The firſt bill that appeared for this purpoſe, was from the hand of lord Chatham, whoſe energetic abilities and dignified policy, had re-

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cently reſcued the empire from ruin. But not even the talents of a man who had been courted by his ſovereign, admired by his enemies, and adored by the nation, had any influence on a miniſtry, deaf to every thing but an American revenue, and the ſupremacy of parliament. After the failure of the efforts of this diſtinguiſhed ſtateſman, Burke, Franklin, Fothergill, Hartley, and others, anxious to prevent the wanton waſte of human blood, brought forward their propoſals to procure a reconciliation with the colonies, either on the terms of equity, or partial conceſſion. They ſupported them with the moſt intereſting pathos, and with great ſtrength of argument: but neither the perſuaſive eloquence of the orator,* the reaſoning powers or concluſive arguments of the philoſopher,† nor the mild ſimplicity and humane interference of the upright quaker,‡ were liſtened to with the ſmalleſt attention, by a predetermined adminiſtration, ſanctioned by the approbation of royalty. Every ſuggeſtion that wore any appearance of lenity, or re-union with the colonies, was rejected on the principle of the ſupremacy of parliament. Tenacious of their power, and the right to alter, or reſume at pleaſure, all colonial charters, and to regulate and tax as conſiſtent with the convenience of the

* Edmund Burke.

† Dr. Franklin.

‡ Dr. Fothergill.....All well known in the literary world.

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parent ſtate, the late petition from congreſs, met the uſual neglect that had been ſhewn to every former application.

Before it was totally rejected, the duke of Richmond ſuggeſted the propriety of queſtioning governor Penn, who preſented the petition, relative to the ſtrength, the reſources, the diſpoſition, and the deſigns of America. Mr. Penn was a gentleman whoſe talents were equal to the buſineſs he was ſent to negociate. When called on the floor of the houſe of commons for examination, he gave a clear and decided ſtatement of the ſituation and the views, the expectations, the wiſhes, and the final determination of his countrymen, if they failed in their preſent attempt to be heard by their ſovereign.* But it was immediately aſſerted, that congreſs was an illegal body; that no parley could be held with rebels; that while the Americans in hoſtile array were preparing armies for oppoſition to parliamentary authority, it was beneath the dignity of the ſupreme legiſlative, to hold treaties with men who denied their ſupremacy; that coercion alone was the proper line of action for the nation; and that it was neceſſary this ſyſtem ſhould be puſhed with redoubled vigor. Conſequently, after much debate, it was agreed in the houſe, that foreign auxiliaries ſhould be

* When the petition was preſented by Mr. Penn and Arthur Lee, Eſq. they were told by the Miniſter that no notice would be taken of it.

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hired, at an immenſe expenſe, to aſſiſt in the complete ſubjugation of the colonies. A treaty with the landgrave of Heſſe, and a price for payment for the loan of his ſlaves was voted, and ſeveral other ſimilar ſteps adopted to facilitate the deſigns againſt America.

Theſe meaſures appeared to many in the houſe, replete with abſurdity, particularly the calling in of foreign mercenaries, to aſſiſt in a work that diſcovered little liberality, leſs humanity, and no wiſe policy. It was obſerved, that no language or act could juſtify the authors or ſupporters of this project. It was replied, "that foreign troops, inſpired with military "maxims and ideas of implicit obedience, "would be leſs liable to be biaſſed by that falſe "lenity, which national ſoldiers might indulge "at the expenſe of national intereſt."* This was an unuſual and bold aſſertion to be made in a Britiſh houſe of commons, and ſeemed tinctured with a ſpirit of deſpotiſm, that had not always been characteriſtic of Engliſhmen: and indeed now, the minority in oppoſition to this and ſeveral other high-handed meaſures, was too reſpectable to be frowned into inſignificance, even by the diſapprobation of kings.†

The noble names of Rockingham, Scarborough, Abingdon, Effingham, and Ponſonby;

* Britiſh Annual Regiſter.

† See Appendix, Note No. XVI.

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the dukes of Manchester, Devonshire, Richmond, and Grafton, with many others of equal rank and consideration, appeared on the protests against the sanguine, summary, and dangerous proceedings of parliament. Their opinions were supported even by some of the royal family: the efforts of the duke of Cumberland were strenuous; he reprobated in the most explicit terms, the whole American system; he lamented in pathetic language, the employing of foreigners; he observed, that he much regretted "that *Brunswickers*, who once to their "honor, had been employed in defence of the "liberties of the subject, should now be sent to "subjugate a distant part of the British em-"pire."*

But in spite of *protests*, arguments, reason, or humanity, the parliament of Britain proceeded as expressed in the dissent of the lords, to "a "*refinement* in *tyranny*." Towards the close of the year, they interdicted all trade with America, declared the colonies out of the royal protection, licensed the seizure of their property on the high seas, and by an act of parliament, gave the forfeiture to the captors, and directed an indiscriminate compulsion of all persons taken on board any American vessel, to serve as common sailors in his majesty's navy.

* See the speech of his royal highness at large in the British Annual Register.

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This mode of procedure was oppoſed and criminated with all the powers of language, by ſome members of the firſt conſequence in the houſe of commons. They pronounced it the laſt degree of wretchedneſs and indignity to which human nature could be ſubjugated. They obſerved that "this was an inſtance of tyranny "worſe than death, thus to compel the unfor- "tunate captives who might fall into their "hands, after being plundered themſelves, to "aſſiſt their enemies in plundering their breth- "ren." They aſſerted "that ſuch modes of ſe- "verity were without example, except among "pirates, outlaws, and the common enemies of "civil ſociety." Yet, notwithſtanding theſe ſenſible remonſtrances, there were ſome of the moſt diſtinguiſhed characters in England, ſo heated by party ſpirit, national pride, and the high claims of parliamentary dignity and ſuperiority, as ſhameleſsly to avow the neceſſity of leaping over the boundaries of equity, and winking out of ſight the immutable laws of juſtice. It is painful to record, as an evidence of this aſſertion, a ſingle inſtance, that muſt cauſe a bluſh for the weakneſs or wickedneſs of man. Even the great lord *Mansfield*, whoſe ſuperior talents, profound erudition, law knowledge, and philoſophical abilities, ſhould have elevated him above all local or party prejudices, declared publickly, "that the original queſtion of *right* ought "no longer to be conſidered; that the juſtice "of the cauſe muſt give way to the preſent ſit-

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"uation; that they were engaged in a war, "and muſt uſe every effort to obtain the end "propoſed thereby."* If the politician can juſtify this ſophiſtical reaſoning, the dictates of juſtice muſt lead the upright to revolt at the idea: a declaration ſo devoid of the principles of rectitude, from a man of his lordſhip's celebrity, at once ſhocks the feelings of equity and wounds the ſenſations of humanity.

The paſſions of ſome were irritated by this extraordinary ſpeech of lord Mansfield, and the judgment of others convinced, that America had nothing to expect either from the juſtice or clemency of parliament, under the influence of men of ſuch abilities and principles. Yet ſtill the chimerical project of conqueſt and ſubjugation, continued to be uniformly oppoſed by the diſſenting lords in one houſe, and a melioration of the American ſyſtem urged in the other, on the ſtrongeſt grounds of reaſon, juſtice, policy, and humanity; but a miniſterial majority was aſtoniſhingly kept up in both, and on a diviſion on every queſtion relative to the colonies, the minority bore no proportion to the names in the other ſcale.

A war with America did not at this period appear to be the general wiſh of the nation at

* Debates in parliament, and lord Mansfield's ſpeech in the houſe of lords, December, 1775.

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large; but engaged in their own pleaſures and purſuits, they ſeemed rather inattentive to the object in diſpute, as a matter that very little concerned them. There was indeed ſome clamor among the great body of the merchants, on the total deſtruction of the American trade, and ſome of the manufacturing towns were diſpoſed to be riotous on the occaſion; but the danger of a foreign war, or a final diſmemberment of the empire, was not generally apprehended by the people, though theſe conſequences were predicted by ſome ſagacious heads, and the hearts of the patriotic and compaſſionate were hurt by the anticipation of the impending evils.

Calling in the aid of foreigners, and introducing a large body of German mercenaries in Britiſh pay, to ſettle a domeſtic quarrel with the colonies, was mortifying to the pride and valor of every uncorrupted Engliſhman. But the torrent of ſecret influence was irreſiſtible; the expenſive ſyſtem was precipitated: prerogative and conqueſt was the miniſterial creed; *power* the princely object: and on the approbatory ſpeech of the monarch, when all was at hazard, there appeared a coolneſs that bordered on *apathy*. Silence and ſubmiſſion were enjoined on the friends of America in the houſe of commons; and the liberty of writing their names, and witneſſing their uneaſineſs by their own ſignature, was all the conſolation of the

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proteſting lords, while theſe important queſtions were in agitation.* CHAP. VIII. 1775.

The debates in parliament relative to colonial meaſures, the king's ſpeech, and the rejection of the late petition of the continental congreſs, arrived in America before the month of March, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-ſix. 1776. Theſe were accompanied with the intelligence of the Heſſian treaty, and that foreign auxiliaries from various other nations were to be employed in the compulſory ſyſtem, and that the barbarous ſtrangers were to aſſiſt in the entire ſubjugation of the colonies, if not otherwiſe reduced to unworthy ſubmiſſion.

On this information, the indignation of all ranks can ſcarcely be deſcribed. The king's ſpeech was condemned, and ordered to be burnt in the centre of the camp at Cambridge. The wavering were reſolved, the timid grew bold, the placid and philoſophic lovers of peace left the retired haunts of literary felicity, and beneath the helmet and the buckler, courted the poſt of danger :—vigorous action was now the

* On the prohibitory, the reſtraining act, the interdiction of trade, and all other coercive bills, the uſual rate of voices in favor of them, was from an hundred and twenty to an hundred and fifty—the number of the minority ſeldom more than thirty or forty; when they amounted to forty, it was thought a conſiderable acquiſition.

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only line of conduct to be obſerved through every department. Previous to any other movement, it was judged important that the Britiſh forces ſhould be immediately removed from their ſtrong hold in the town of Boſton, leſt the work ſhould be rendered more difficult on the arrival of freſh troops from Great Britain, now daily expected.

General Waſhington, ſenſible of this neceſſity, and that no more time was to be loſt, opened a ſevere cannonade on the weſtern ſide, not far diſtant from the town, on the evening of the fourth of March. This was deſigned rather to divert attention within the walls, than for any important conſequences expected from this manœuvre without. The Americans kept up a conſtant fire through the night, while ſeveral ſmaller works were erected for the annoyance of the beſieged; but the principal effect was expected from the heights of Dorcheſter. By the greateſt induſtry and diſpatch, a ſtrong battery, very unexpectedly to the enemy, appeared there on the morning of the fifth, from whence the Americans played their artillery with eaſe on the town. The aſſailants under the direction of general Thomas, erected and extended their works in ſuch a judicious manner, as to command the peninſula leading to Boſton, Caſtle-William, and at the ſame time a conſiderable part of the harbor.

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General Howe, mortified that ſuch an advantageous poſt ſhould have been ſo long neglected by himſelf, and aſtoniſhed at the appearance of ſuch ſtrong and defenſible works, riſing as it were in a night, without noiſe or alarm in that quarter, did not long heſitate on the part neceſſary for him to act in this critical conjuncture. There remained no alternative between a bold and vigorous attempt to diſlodge the Americans, or an immediate evacuation of the town. To fly on the firſt appearance of danger, was humiliating to the pride of the ſoldier, leſſening his military honor, and ſinking the dignity of the commander in chief.

A choice of difficulties lay before him. He was ſhort of proviſions; the ſoldiers had become diſcontented with the ſervice, and fatigued with continual watching: an immediate retreat might appear to him leſs diſgraceful, than the conſequences of reſiſtance under many apparent diſadvantages. On the other hand, chagrined at the idea of drawing off ſeven or eight thouſand of the beſt troops the king his maſter had in ſervice, without ſtriking a blow, and relinquiſhing the only American town they then had in poſſeſſion, to the *undiſciplined peaſantry* of the country, was ſtill a more humiliating thought. From theſe conſiderations he made all poſſible preparation to diſlodge the American troops, the evening after they were diſcovered on the heights of Dorcheſter. But

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the intervention of the elements diſconcerted his operations: a tremendous ſtorm of wind and rain prevented the dangerous enterpriſe, and ſaved the expenſe of much blood.

General Howe finding his deſign impracticable, in conſequence of this diſappointment, ordered an embarkation to begin as ſoon as the tempeſt ſhould ſubſide. But embarraſſed by a crowd of refugees and other delinquents, who, conſcious they could not rely on their country for ſafety, had thrown themſelves on his protection; encumbered with women, children, furniture, ſoldiers, officers, and camp equipage; the inconveniences and dangers of a voyage at the equinoctial ſeaſon; the ſterility of the country* and the coldneſs of the clime to which he muſt repair, with a diſcontented army and a *group* of miſerable, diſappointed tories, rendered the ſituation of the Britiſh commander in chief truly pitiable. To add to the confuſion of the ſcene, the ſtricteſt harmony did not exiſt between the officers of the army and navy; this increaſed the difficulty of accommodation on this unexpected emergency, when ſo many uſeleſs perſons claimed protection and ſubſiſtence.

When the Americans ſaw the Britiſh troops about to depart, they did not offer to impede

* General Howe went from Boſton to Halifax, Nova Scotia.

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their deſign in the ſmalleſt degree; the cannonade was ſuſpended, and they beheld with an eye of compaſſion, the extraordinary emigration of ſome hundreds of diſaffected Americans, whom they ſuffered to depart with the ſucceſsleſs army, without a wiſh to retard their flight. Theſe unhappy people took with them ſuch of their effects as the hurry of the occaſion and their military maſters would permit. General Waſhington with a few troops entered Boſton, with the enſigns of triumph diſplayed, and beheld the rear of the panic-ſtruck army of Britain, precipitately flying from a town that had long been the object of miniſterial vengeance.

This bloodleſs victory on the one ſide, and the diſgraceful flight on the other, was viewed with pleaſure and ſurpriſe, or with aſtoniſhment and grief, in proportion to the political hopes and fears that agitated the various parties, who all conſidered the tranſactions of the day replete with important conſequences. Every mark of reſpect was externally ſhewn to general Waſhington, even by thoſe who were not well affected to the cauſe in which he was engaged. Many of this claſs, more culpable than ſome who went off with the Britiſh army, choſe to ſtay and caſt themſelves on the mercy of their countrymen, rather than to hazard the danger of a voyage, the loſs of property, and a ſeparation from their families.

Some, much leſs criminal than theſe, and many really inoffenſive perſons, ſuddenly ſtruck

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with imaginary fears, abandoned their habitations and their country, which by a little addreſs they might quietly have poſſeſſed. Several very doubtful characters not only acted with decent civility and condeſcenſion, but confidently aſſumed merit to themſelves as friends of the revolution: ſome of theſe were afterwards promoted to places and offices of high truſt. Indeed the loyaliſts in general who ſtayed in Boſton, and choſe to run all hazards rather than quit their native country, experienced much clemency from the oppoſite party; yet, perhaps not in the full latitude that policy might have dictated: but the impreſſions of danger and inſult to which the victors had long been expoſed, operated more powerfully in the minds of many, than the laws of forgiveneſs, or the diſtant view of political conſequences.

Thus a kind of inquiſitorial court was erected in Boſton, and ſome perſons more warm than diſcreet, and more zealous than judicious, were appointed to decide on the criminality of ſtate delinquents, ſeveral of whom were adjudged to puniſhments rather ridiculous than ſevere. This ſtep tended only to ſtrengthen the alienation of thoſe who had, either from intereſt, treachery, timidity, or a paſſion for the ſplendor of monarchy, enliſted under the banners of royalty, without any fixed principles in religion or politics. Had the new government at this period, paſſed an act of indemnity and oblivion,

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and proclaimed pardon to all who had incurred the public reſentment, excepting a few who had notoriouſly deſerved proſcription, it is probable many would have returned to the boſom of their country, and become faithful ſubjects to the United States, when they could have done it without the imputation of being rebels to their ſovereign. This conſideration before the declaration of independence, had a conſcientious influence on the minds of ſome who diſapproved of the miniſterial encroachments, yet ſcrupled the right of reſiſtance while the legal ſubjects of the Britiſh crown; but the line of ſeparation ſoon after drawn, the doubts of many well-diſpoſed perſons were entirely diſſipated.

After the evacuation of Boſton, the ſucceſſion of important events was too rapid for the mind to dwell long on ſingle incidents. It remained for ſome time uncertain where the Britiſh army and navy would next direct their operations. Though they ſailed immediately for Halifax, it was only to diſembark their uſeleſs hands, and ſecure a rendezvous until freſh reinforcements ſhould arrive from England.

The ſituation of the ſouthern colonies at this time commanded the attention of every well-wiſher to the American cauſe. Some time before the Britiſh troops left Boſton, general Clinton had been ſent ſouthward to the aſſiſtance of

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governor Martin and lord William Campbell. We have ſeen that before they left their governments, they had inſtigated a number of the back ſettlers in the Carolinas to create diſturbances. Theſe people formerly aggrieved by their own government, had ſtyled themſelves *Regulators*, had embodied for oppoſition, had reſiſted authority, and had ſuffered ſeverely. They were now perſuaded, that the ſame perſons who had ſome years before oppreſſed them, were at this time in rebellion againſt their ſovereign. This opinion was ſtrengthened by governor Martin, who kept up a correſpondence with their leaders, and invited them to repair to the royal ſtandard at Brunſwick, where they ſhould be ſupported by a large body of the king's troops.

Though as obſerved, theſe people had been compelled to ſubmiſſion, and had remained quiet a number of years, yet their old antipathies were not obliterated. Ignorant of the cauſes of the general uneaſineſs of the colonies, and miſtaken in character, they united under the very men who had formerly exerciſed every ſeverity againſt them and their leaders.* Theſe were joined by the Highlanders, who had mi-

* Particularly a colonel Fanning, a violent partiſan of the crown, who had been in the former inſurrection, the executioner of moſt of their principal leaders, without even the form of a trial.

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grated in ſhoals after the rebellion in Scotland, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and forty-five: they had ſuffered too much not to dread a ſecond oppoſition to the authority of the king of England. Theſe deſcriptions of men were for a time very troubleſome on the ſouthern borders, more particularly of North Carolina; but by the ſpirit and activity of ſome continental troops, under the command of brigadier general More, the whole party was defeated. Their commanding officer Macdonald, and moſt of their other officers impriſoned, the unhappy remnant who eſcaped impriſonment or death, retreated to the woods; and all hope or fear from this quarter, was extinguiſhed before the arrival of Sir Henry Clinton at Cape Fear.

As ſoon as it was diſcovered at Cambridge, that general Clinton had left Boſton, general Lee was ordered to ſet forward to obſerve his manœuvres, and prepare to meet him with advantage in any part of the continent he might think proper to viſit. No man was better qualified at this early ſtage of the war, to penetrate the deſigns, or to face in the field an experienced Britiſh veteran, than general Lee. He had been an officer of character and rank in the late war between England and France.* Fearleſs of danger, and fond of glory, he was

* He had ſerved with reputation in Portugal, under the command of the count de la Lippe.

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calculated for the field, without any of the graces that recommend the ſoldier to the circles of the polite. He was plain in his perſon even to uglineſs, and careleſs in his manners to a degree of rudeneſs. He poſſeſſed a bold genius and an unconquerable ſpirit: his voice was rough, his garb ordinary, his deportment moroſe. A conſiderable traveller, and well acquainted with moſt of the European nations, he was frequently agreeable in narration, and judicious and entertaining in obſervation. Diſguſted with the miniſterial ſyſtem, and more ſo with his ſovereign who authoriſed it, he cheriſhed the American cauſe from motives of reſentment, and a predilection in favor of freedom, more than from a juſt ſenſe of the rights of mankind.

Without religion or country, principle, or attachment, gold was his deity, and liberty the idol of his fancy: he hoarded the former without taſte for its enjoyment, and worſhipped the latter as the patroneſs of licentiouſneſs, rather than the protectreſs of virtue. He affected to deſpiſe the opinion of the world, yet was fond of applauſe. Ambitious of fame without the dignity to ſupport it, he emulated the heroes of antiquity in the field, while in private life he ſunk into the vulgarity of the clown. Congreſs did wiſely to avail themſelves of his military experience in the infancy of a confederated army, and ſtill more wiſely in placing him in a de-

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gree of ſubordination. He was on the firſt liſt of continental officers, and only the generals Waſhington and Ward were named before him; but though nominally the third in rank, as a ſoldier he was ſecond to no man. The abilities of general Ward were better adapted to the more quiet diſquiſitions of the cabinet, that on the hoſtile and dangerous ſcenes of the field or the camp, both which he ſoon left and retired to private life, when nothing remained to prevent this ſingular ſtranger from taking the command of the armies of the United States, but the life of Waſhington.

General Lee with his detachment from Cambridge reached New York, and put it in a ſtate of defence, before ſir Henry Clinton arrived there, though he had ſailed from Boſton ſeveral days previous to its being known at Cambridge. While at New York, Lee drew up a liſt of ſuſpected perſons, and diſarmed them. He carried his military authority ſo high, that the congreſs of that ſtate thought proper to check his career: they informed him, that the trial and puniſhment of their citizens belonged to themſelves, and not to any military character. He apologized by obſerving, that "when the enemy "were at the door, *forms* muſt be diſpenſed "with; that his duty to them, to the continent, "and to his conſcience, dictated the meaſure; "that if he had done wrong, he would ſubmit "himſelf to the ſhame of being imputed raſh;

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"but that he ſhould ſtill have the conſolation in "his own breaſt, that pure motives of ſerving "the community, uncontaminated by individ- "ual reſentment, had urged him to thoſe ſteps."

The movements of general Lee were ſo rapid, that to the ſurpriſe of Sir Henry Clinton, he was in Virginia before him. But as the object of the Britiſh armament was ſtill farther ſouth, Lee with uncommon celerity, traverſed the continent, met general Clinton in North Carolina, and was again ready for the defence of Sullivan's Iſland, near Charleſton in South Carolina, before the arrival of the Britiſh troops under the command of general Clinton.

Sir Peter Parker had appeared off Cape Fear in the month of May, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-ſix, with a conſiderable ſquadron of line-of-battle ſhips, and a number of tranſports containing ſeveral regiments of land forces, and a heavy train of artillery. A body of troops commanded by lord Cornwallis and general Vaughan were ſoon after landed on Long Iſland: the deſign was to unite with general Clinton, and reduce Charleſton, the rich capital of South Carolina. This ſtate had thrown off their allegiance, aſſumed a government of their own, and choſen John Rutledge, Eſq. their chief magiſtrate, under the ſtyle and title of *Preſident*.

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Notwithſtanding the parade of immediate attack, near a month elapſed in total inaction, before the aſſault on Sullivan's Iſland was begun by the Britiſh naval commander: in the mean time, the Americans were ſtrongly poſted there. The engagement took place on the twenty-ninth of June, and was conducted with great ſpirit and bravery on both ſides; the higheſt encomiums are juſtly due to the valor and intrepidity of the Britiſh officers and ſeamen; and notwithſtanding the courage and ability of general Gadſden, the vigor, activity, and bravery of general Moultrie, and the experience and military knowledge of general Lee, it is probable the action would have terminated more to the honor of the Britiſh navy, had they been properly ſupported by the land forces.

It remains yet to be inveſtigated, why no attempt was made by the troops on Long Iſland, to cauſe a diverſion on the other ſide, which would doubtleſs have altered the whole face of the action. But whether from a ſeries of unexpected reſiſtance, their imaginations had become habituated to view every thing through the medium of danger, or whether from a degree of caution that ſometimes betrays the brave into the appearance of timidity, or from any jealouſies ſubſiſting between the commanders, is uncertain. However, this neglect occaſioned loud complaints among the officers of the navy; nor was it eaſy for lord Cornwallis

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and general Clinton, though high on the rolls of military fame, to wipe off the aſperſions thrown on their conduct. Even their apologies for their own inactivity, inſtead of exculpating themſelves, were rather a teſtimony of the ſkill, ability, and vigor of their antagoniſts; who, in ſo ſhort a time, were prepared to bid defiance to the combined force of Britain, though commanded by ſea and land, by officers of acknowledged merit in the line of their profeſſion.

Many brave officers of the navy fought with valor and ſpirit, that would have been truly glorious in a more honorable cauſe. One inſtance of this, among many others of the unfortunate who fell on the occaſion, was the valiant and ſpirited captain Morris of the Briſtol: he loſt an arm by a ball in the beginning of the engagement, and while retired to dreſs his wounds, two of his ſurgeons were killed by his ſide, before they had finiſhed the operation. On this, the captain with his uſual intrepidity, reſumed his command; when he immediately received a ſhot through the body, and had time only to obſerve before he expired, that "he conſigned "his family to his God and his country." After an obſtinate engagement of ten or twelve hours, the ſailors diſheartened, and their officers wounded,* the ſhattered fleet with diffi-

* Lord William Campbell, governor of South Carolina, who had taken refuge on board one of the king's ſhips, was mortally wounded in the attack on fort Moultrie.

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culty retired to the diſtance of three or four miles from the fort, and in a few days put themſelves in a condition to withdraw to the general rendezvous before New York.

The triumph of the Americans in this ſucceſs, who had always juſtly dreaded the naval power of Britain, was in equal proportion to the chagrin of their enemies, thus repulſed in a quarter where, from the locality of circumſtances, they leaſt expected it. The multitude of manumitted ſlaves, and the ariſtocratic ſpirit of many of the principal planters, had flattered them with the idea, that in the ſouthern colonies they ſhould meet but a feeble reſiſtance. Lord Dunmore, who had joined in the expedition, continued ſeveral weeks after the repulſe, to cruiſe about the borders of Virginia, and the Carolinas, with his little fleet of fugitives and ſlaves. But, as the mid-ſummer heats increaſed, a peſtilential fever raged on board, which carried off many of the refugees, and ſwept away moſt of the miſerable negroes he had decoyed from their maſters. Forbidden admittance wherever he attempted to land, and ſuffering for proviſions, he burnt ſeveral of his veſſels; the remainder, except one in which he ſheltered himſelf and family, and two other ſhips of war for his protection, he ſent laden with the wretched victims of his folly and cruelty, to

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ſeek ſome kind of ſubſiſtence in the Floridas, Bermudas, and the Weſt Indies.

Lord Howe had been long expected with his motley mercenaries from Heſſe, Hanover, and Brunſwick. His brother Sir William, after a diſagreeable reſidence of two or three months at Halifax, did not think proper to wait longer there the arrival of his lordſhip. Miſerably accommodated, and painfully agitated by the recollection of his diſgraceful flight from Boſton, anxious for intelligence from Europe, and diſtreſſed by the delay of recruits and ſupplies, without which little could be done to retrieve his ſuffering fame, he quitted that ſtation, accompanied by admiral Shuldham, and arrived at Sandy Hook the twenty-ninth of June. On his paſſage to New York, he accidentally fell in with a few ſcattering tranſports from England, which he took under his protection, while many leſs fortunate were captured by the American cruiſers.

General Howe was, ſoon after his arrival at New York, joined by the repulſed troops from the ſouthward, and the broken ſquadron under the command of Sir Peter Parker; by a regiment from St. Auguſtine, another from Penſacola, alſo by a few troops from St. Vincents, ſome ſmall additions from other poſts, and a conſiderable party of loyaliſts from New Jerſey, and from the environs of Philadelphia and New

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York, which by great induſtry had been collected and embodied by governor Tryon. Notwithſtanding this acquiſition of ſtrength, he found the continental army ſo ſtrongly poſted on Long Iſland and New York, that he did not immediately attempt any thing of conſequence.

Immediately after the evacuation of Boſton, general Waſhington had ſent on the army in detachments, and when he had made ſome neceſſary arrangements for the future defence of the eaſtern ſtates, he haſtened on himſelf to New York, where he had made all poſſible preparation for the reception of general Howe. It has juſt been obſerved, that the Britiſh commander had collected all his ſtrength, and called in the forces from every quarter of America except Canada, where, under the direction of the generals Carleton and Burgoyne, meaſures were ripening for a junction at Albany, with the expected conquerors of the more ſouthern colonies. But in the preſent circumſtance of affairs, general Howe thought proper to land his troops at Staten Iſland, and wait more favorable appearances, which he had reaſon to expect on the arrival of his brother, an event hourly and anxiouſly looked for.

His lordſhip was conſidered by many in America, as the harbinger of peace, though advancing in all the pride and pomp of war, accompanied by the ready executioners of every

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hoſtile deſign. It was reported, that the commander of a formidable equipment both for ſea and land ſervice, came out in a double capacity; that though prepared for offenſive operations, lord Howe had yet a commiſſion from his royal maſter to accommodate the diſputes, and to reſtore tranquillity to the colonies, on generous and equitable terms. The augurs of each party predicted the conſequences of this miniſterial manœuvre, and interpreted the deſigns of his lordſhip's commiſſion, according to their own hopes, fears, or expectations.

In the infancy of her emancipation, America was not ſuch an adept in the ſcience of political intrigue, but that many yet flattered themſelves, that an accommodation might take place, and that halcyon days might be reſtored by the interpoſition of the two brothers, lord and general Howe, joined in the commiſſion of peace under the ſanction of royal indulgence; but more judicious men ſaw through, and deſpiſed the bubble of policy, which held a pardon in one hand and a poniard in the other, with the deteſtable offer of aſſaſſination or ſlavery. They conſidered the mode of pacification propoſed, as at once an inſult to the feelings, and an affront to the underſtandings of a people, too ſerious for trifling when all was at ſtake, and too wiſe to be cajoled by ſuperficial appearances. Yet, thoſe beſt acquainted with the ſituation and character, the genius and connexions of the

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inhabitants of the middle colonies, were not ſurpriſed to find many among them, who ſeemed ready to embrace ſuch humiliating conditions, as the ſafety, the intereſt, the honor, and juſtice of America, were bound to reject.

It was well known, that from the beginning of the grand conteſt, the lamp of liberty had not burnt ſo bright in New York, New Jerſey, and Pennſylvania, as in ſome other parts of America. Though there was a party in New York ſtrongly attached to the cauſe of the colonies, there had been early reaſon to ſuppoſe, that ſome men of high conſideration in that ſtate were not entirely proof againſt the influence of miniſterial gold. New Jerſey was the retreat of the timid, the diſaffected, and the lovers of inglorious eaſe, from each corner of America. They there thought they might reſt ſecure from the ravages of war, as the torch which was lighted at both ends, might be extinguiſhed before it penetrated to the centre.

The quakers and the proprietary intereſt, long hung as a dead weight on the ſpirited meaſures of the genuine friends of freedom and of their country, both in Pennſylvania and Maryland; but the incidents of a few months connected every intereſt, and brought almoſt every diſſentient voice into union, and haſtened on an event that every one conſidered as deciſive of the fate of America. The neceſſity of a declaration of

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independence was acknowledged by all: even Maryland, the laſt ſtate in the union that came into the meaſure, and whoſe delegates ſeceded on the queſtion of independence, was among the firſt who erected their own government, and eſtabliſhed their own modes of legiſlation, independent of proprietors or kings.

"The dread of ſlavery in free nations, has at "all times produced more virtues than the prin- "ciples of their political inſtitutions."* This dread hung heavily on the moſt ſober and judicious, the moſt wiſe and virtuous part of the inhabitants of America. They were ſenſible that both public and private virtue ſink with the loſs of liberty, and that the nobler emulations which are drawn out and adorn the ſoul of man, when not fettered by ſervility, frequently hide themſelves in the ſhade, or ſhrink into littleneſs at the frown of a deſpot. They felt too much for themſelves, and feared too much for poſterity, longer to balance between either complete or partial ſubmiſſion, or an unreſerved and entire claim to abſolute independence.

Theſe ideas precipitated the important *era* when a connexion was diſſolved, the continuance of which both nature and affection ſeemed to require. Great Britain the revered parent, and America the dutiful child, had long been

* Travels of Anacharſis.

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bound together by intereſt, by a ſameneſs of habits, manners, religion, laws, and government. The recollection of their original conſanguinity had always been cheriſhed with an amiable ſenſibility, or a kind of mechanic enthuſiaſm, that promoted mutual felicity when they met on each other's ſhores, or in diſtant lands ſaluted each other in the ſame language.

A dereliction of old habits of friendſhip and attachment was far from the wiſh of many, who had yet ſtrongly oppoſed the miniſterial ſyſtem: but the period was now arrived, when America felt her wrongs, without hope of redreſs, and ſupported her own rights by aſſuming her rank as a diſtinct nation on the political theatre. We ſhall ſee her relinquiſh at once all hopes of protection, or fears of control, from the ſovereignty of Britain. The reverential awe with which ſhe had formerly viewed her potent parent, was laid aſide, and every effort made to forget her fond attachment for a people, that from her earlieſt infancy ſhe had looked up to as fathers, brothers, and friends.

The ſeverities of the Britiſh government towards the American colonies, had not yet taught them to expreſs themſelves in any other modes of language, but what indicated their firm attachment to the mother country; nor had they eraſed the habitual ideas, even of tenderneſs, conveyed in their uſual modes of ex-

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preſſion. When they formed a deſign to viſit England, it had always been thus announced, "I am going home." Home, the ſeat of happineſs, the retreat to all the felicities of the human mind, is too intimately aſſociated with the beſt feelings of the heart, to renounce without pain, whether applied to the natural or the political parent.

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Declaration of Independence.—Lord Howe's Arrival in America.—Action on Long Iſland.—Retreat of the Americans through the Jerſies, and the Loſs of the Forts Waſhington and Lee.—Affairs in Canada.—Surpriſe of the Heſſians at Trenton.—Various Tranſactions in the Jerſies.—General Howe's Retreat—Makes Head-Quarters at Brunſwick—His Indeciſion—Some Traits of his Character.

THE commiſſioners who had been announced as the meſſengers of peace, were now hourly expected; but the dubious aſpect of their miſſion, and the equivocal character in which they were about to appear, was far from lulling to inattention the guardians of the cauſe of America. Their errand was oſtenſibly, to reſtore peace to the colonies; but many circumſtances combined to evince, that the deſign was in reality, to furniſh new pretexts for the proſecution of the war, with redoubled vigor. Thus was the continental congreſs fully convinced of the impropriety of longer holding themſelves in ſuſpenſe, by deluſory hopes, or the uncertain termination of their expectations or their fears. They were ſenſible the ſtep they were about to take, would either ſet their country on the pinnacle of human glory, or plunge it in the abject ſtate into which turbulent and conquered colonies have

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been generally reduced. Yet they wiſely judged, that this was a proper period to break the ſhackles, and renounce all political union with the parent ſtate, by a free and bold declaration of the independence of the American States. This meaſure had been contemplated by ſome gentlemen in the ſeveral colonies, ſome months before it took place. They had communicated their ſentiments to the individual members of congreſs, but that body had been apprehenſive, that the people at large were not prepared to unite in a ſtep ſo replete with important conſequences. But the moment of deciſion had now arrived, when both the congreſs and the inhabitants of the colonies advanced too far to recede.

Richard Henry Lee, Eſq., a delegate from the ſtate of Virginia, a gentleman of diſtinguiſhed abilities, uniform patriotiſm, and unſhaken firmneſs and integrity, was the firſt who dared explicitly to propoſe, that this decided meaſure, on which hung ſuch mighty conſequences, ſhould no longer be delayed. This public and unequivocal propoſal, from a man of his virtue and ſhining qualities, appeared to ſpread a kind of ſudden diſmay. A ſilent aſtoniſhment for a few minutes ſeemed to pervade the whole aſſembly: this was ſoon ſucceeded by a long debate, and a conſiderable diviſion of ſentiment on the important queſtion.

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After the ſhort ſilence juſt obſerved, the meaſure propoſed by Mr. Lee was advocated with peculiar zeal by John Adams, Eſq., of the Maſſachuſetts Bay. He roſe with a face of intrepidity and the voice of energy, and invoked the *god* of *eloquence*, to enable him to do juſtice to the cauſe of his country, and to enforce this important ſtep in ſuch a manner, as might ſilence all oppoſition, and convince every one of the neceſſity of an immediate declaration of the independence of the United States of America.

Mr. John Dickinſon, of Pennſylvania, took the lead in oppoſition to the boldneſs and danger of this decided meaſure. He had drawn the petition to the king forwarded by Mr. Penn, and though no man was more ſtrenuous in ſupport of the rights of the colonies, he had always been averſe to a ſeparation from Britain, and ſhuddered at the idea of an avowed revolt of the American colonies. He aroſe on this occaſion with no leſs ſolemnity than Mr. Adams had recently done, and with equal pathos of expreſſion, and more brilliance of epithet, he invoked the *Great Governor* of the *Univerſe*, to animate him with powers of language ſufficient to exhibit a view of the dread conſequences to both countries, that ſuch a haſty diſmemberment of the empire might produce. He deſcanted largely on the happy effects that might probaby enſue from more patient and conciliatory diſpoſi-

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tions, and urged at leaſt a temporary ſuſpenſion of a ſtep, that could never be revoked. He declared that it was his opinion, that even policy forbade the precipitation of this meaſure, and that humanity more ſtrongly dictated, that they ought to wait longer the ſucceſs of petitions and negociations, before they formally renounced their allegiance to the king of Great Britain, broke off all connexion with England, plunged alone into an unequal war, and ruſhed without allies into the unforeſeen and inevitable dangers that attended it.

The conſequences of ſuch a ſolemn act of ſeparation were indeed of ſerious and extenſive magnitude. The energy of brilliant talents, and great ſtrength of argument, were diſplayed by both parties on this weighty occaſion. The reaſons urging the neceſſity of deciſion, and the indubitable danger of delay, were clear and cogent; the objections, plauſible, humane, and important: but after a fair diſcuſſion of the queſtion, an accurate ſtatement of the reaſons for adopting the meaſure, and a candid ſcrutiny of the objections againſt it, grounded either on policy or humanity, a large majority of the members of congreſs appeared in favor of an immediate renunciation of allegiance to the crown, or any future ſubjugation to the king of Great Britain.

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A declaration* of the independence of America, and the ſovereignty of the United States, was drawn by the ingenious and philoſophic pen of Thomas Jefferſon, Eſq., a delegate from the ſtate of Virginia.† The delegates from twelve‡ of the American States, agreed almoſt unanimouſly to this declaration; the language, the principles, and the ſpirit of which, were equally honorable to themſelves and their country. It was ſigned by John Hancock, then preſident of congreſs, on the fourth of July, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-ſix.

The allegiance of thirteen ſtates at once withdrawn by a ſolemn declaration, from a government towards which they had looked with the higheſt veneration; whoſe authority they had acknowledged, whoſe laws they had obeyed, whoſe protection they had claimed for more than a century and a half—was a conſideration of ſolemnity, a bold reſolution, an experiment

* See Appendix, Note No. XVII.

† This wiſe and patriotic ſtateſman was afterwards appointed ambaſſador to the court of France. On the adoption of the preſent conſtitution of government, he was appointed ſecretary for foreign affairs, was choſen vice-preſident, and afterwards preſident of the United States of America.

‡ The members from Maryland ſeceded, but in a ſhort time after joined the confederation.

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of hazard: eſpecially when the infancy of the colonies as a nation, without wealth, reſources, or allies, was contraſted with the ſtrength, riches, and power of Great Britain. The timid trembled at the ideas of final ſeparation; the diſciples of paſſive obedience were ſhocked by a reflection of a breach of faith to their ancient ſovereign; and the enemies to the general freedom of mankind, were incenſed to madneſs, or involved in deſpair. But theſe claſſes bore a ſmall proportion to thoſe who reſented the rejection of their petitions, and coolly ſurveyed the impending dangers, that threatened themſelves and their children, which rendered it clear to their apprehenſion, that this ſtep was neceſſary to their political ſalvation. They conſidered themſelves no longer bound by any moral tie, to render fealty to a ſovereign thus diſpoſed to encroach on their civil freedom, which they could now ſecure only by a ſocial compact among themſelves, and which they determined to maintain, or periſh in the attempt.

By the declaration of independence, dreaded by the foes, and for a time doubtfully viewed by many of the friends of America, every thing ſtood on a new and more reſpectable footing, both with regard to the operations of war, or negociations with foreign powers. Americans could now no more be conſidered as *rebels*, in their propoſals for treaties of peace and conciliation with Britain; they were a diſtinct people,

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who claimed the rights, the uſages, the faith, and the reſpect of nations, uncontrolled by any foreign power. The colonies thus irretrievably loſt to Great Britain, a new face appeared on all affairs, both at home and abroad.

America had been little known among the kingdoms of Europe; ſhe was conſidered only as an appendage to the power of Britain: the principles of her ſons were in ſome reſpects diſſimilar, and their manners not yet wrought up to the ſtandard of refinement reigning in ancient courts: her ſtateſmen in general were unacquainted with the intrigues neceſſary for negociation, and the *fineſſe* uſually hackneyed in and about the cabinets of princes. She now appeared in their eyes, a new theatre, pregnant with events that might be intereſting to the civil and political inſtitutions of nations, that had never before paid much attention to the growth, population, and importance of an immenſe territory beyond the Atlantic.

The United States had their ambaſſadors to create, or to tranſplant from the bar or the compting-houſe. Their generals were many of them the yeomanry or the tradeſmen of the country; their ſubordinate officers had been of equal rank and fortune, and the army to be governed was compoſed of many of the old aſſociates of the principal officers, and were equally tenacious of perſonal liberty. The *regalia* of

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power, orders of nobility, and the ſplendor of courts, had been by them viewed only at a diſtance. The diſcipline of armies was entirely new; the difficulty of connecting many diſtinct ſtates to act as it were by one will, the expenſes of government in new exigencies, and the waſte of war had not yet been accurately calculated by their politicians and ſtateſmen. But their ſenators, their repreſentatives, and their magiſtrates, were generally ſagacious and vigilant, upright and firm; their officers were brave, their troops in ſpirits, and with a full confidence in their commander in chief: hope was exhilarated by the retreat from Boſton, and the repeated ſucceſſes of their arms at the ſouthward; while new dignity was added to office, and ſtronger motives for illuſtrious action, by the rank America had now taken among the nations. Thus, by the declaration of independence they had new ground to tread; the ſcene of action was changed, genius was called forth from every quarter of the continent, and the public expectation enhanced by the general favorable appearance in all their military operations.

In this ſituation ſtood affairs, both in the cabinet and the field, when lord Howe arrived at Staten Iſland, with a formidable ſquadron under his command, on the twelfth of July, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-ſix. At the head of this hoſtile arrangement, his

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lordſhip came in full confidence of ſucceſs: yet amidſt the ſplendor and parade of war, while he held out his potent arm, he ſtill cheriſhed the deluſory hope of peace.

By a pompous declaration, he early announced his pacific powers to the principal magiſtrates of the ſeveral colonies, and promiſed pardon to all who, in the late times, had deviated from their allegiance, on condition, that they would ſpeedily return to their duty, and gave encouragement that they ſhould, on compliance, hereafter reap the benefit of royal favor. Lord Howe obſerved in his declaration, "that the "commiſſioners were authorized in his majeſty's "name, to declare any province, colony, coun-"ty, diſtrict, or town, to be at the peace of his "majeſty: and that due conſideration ſhould "be had to the meritorious ſervices of any, who "ſhould aid or aſſiſt in reſtoring the public "tranquillity; that their dutiful repreſenta-"tions ſhould be received, pardons granted, "and ſuitable encouragement to ſuch as would "promote the meaſures of legal government "and peace, in purſuance of his majeſty's moſt "gracious purpoſes."*

* This declaration, and the conſequent reſolves of congreſs, may be ſeen at large in the public journals of the ſeſſion of one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-ſix.

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Congreſs ordered the declaration to be immediately publiſhed in all the American gazettes, that the people of the United States might be fully informed of the terms of peace; that they might ſee for themſelves, that the buſineſs of the commiſſioners was to amuſe, diſunite, and deceive them; and that thoſe who ſtill continued in ſuſpenſe, from hopes founded either on the juſtice or moderation of the court of Great Britain, might now be fully convinced, that their own valor, virtue, and firmneſs, muſt reſcue and preſerve the freedom of their country.*

The next advance his lordſhip made for the execution of his commiſſion, was by a flag ſent on ſhore within a few days after his arrival, with a letter directed to George Waſhington, Eſq. By their principles and their profeſſions, the Americans were taught at this period, to look down on titles and diſtinguiſhed ranks; yet, in this inſtance, they did not think proper to paſs over the implicit denial of either, to their commander in chief. It was viewed as a deſigned affront, from thoſe who conſider ſuch

* The American congreſs were not remiſs at this time, in exerting their efforts to detach foreigners from the ſervice of Britain, and alluring them to become inhabitants of the United States, by promiſing them a quiet reſidence, an allotment of lands, and a ſecurity from all interruptions in the enjoyment of their religious opinions, and the inveſtiture of all the privileges of native citizens.

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adventitious circumſtances of ſo much conſequence, as carefully to avoid all honorary epithets in their addreſſes to the firſt officers of the United States. It was thought more becoming the dignity of his ſtation, both as a ſoldier and a patriot, for the chief commander to refuſe an addreſs that tacitly denied the legality of his commiſſion, and the right now claimed of negociating on terms of equality: this letter was therefore, by the advice of the principal officers, returned unopened.

This drew out a ſecond advance from the hands of the Britiſh commiſſioners, when major Patterſon, adjutant general of the army, was charged with a letter directed to George Waſhington, &c. &c. &c. He was received in military ſtate, and treated with great politeneſs in the American camp. His lordſhip in this ſecond addreſs, expreſſed the higheſt reſpect for the private character of general Waſhington, but as he did not yet condeſcend to acknowledge the commander in chief of the American troops, as any thing more than a *rebel* in arms, this letter was alſo returned without breaking the ſeal.

Many civilities paſſed in this interview with Mr. Patterſon, who did not forget to inſinuate his own wiſhes for the reſtoration of friendſhip and harmony between the two countries. He, with due propriety, made ſeveral obſervations

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on the extenſive powers veſted in the commiſſioners for this ſalutary purpoſe: this introduced ſome general converſation relative to the treatment of priſoners on both ſides. The conference was of ſome length, but as no circumſtance indicated a happy reſult from the negociation, general Waſhington in the moſt explicit terms, informed the Britiſh adjutant general, that the inhabitants of the American States were generally of opinion, that a people armed in defence of their rights, were in the way of their duty; that conſcious of no criminality, they needed no pardon; and as his lordſhip's commiſſion extended no farther, nothing important could be expected from protracting the negociation.

In the mean time, reinforcements were daily dropping in to the aſſiſtance of the Britiſh army. The ſcattered diviſions of Heſſians, Waldeckers, &c. deſigned for the ſummer campaign, had been ſomewhat retarded by not knowing with certainty, the ſpot deſtined for head-quarters. They had ſome of them ſailed directly for Halifax: this occaſioned a delay of any energetic movement, until the latter part of the month of Auguſt, when the Britiſh army began to act with vigor.

General Waſhington had rather incautiouſly encamped the bulk of his army on Long Iſland, a large and plentiful diſtrict, about two miles from

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the city of New York. This iſland contained many ſettlements, through an extent of one hundred and twenty miles in length. It was inhabited principally by loyaliſts, and perſons generally diſaffected to the American cauſe. Many were at a loſs for a reaſon, nor indeed could any conjecture, why the commander of the American army ſhould hazard his troops on an iſland, liable at any moment to be ſurrounded by the Britiſh navy. However it was, ſeveral thouſand Americans were there poſted, under the command of the generals Putnam, Sullivan, and William Alexander, lord Stirling.

Sir William Howe very wiſely judged, that it was a leſs arduous and a more promiſing undertaking to diſlodge the Americans from their encampment on the iſland, than a direct attempt to reduce New York. The royal army at that time conſiſted of about thirty thouſand men: theſe he found no difficulty in landing from Staten Iſland, and in detachments poſted them from one end of Long Iſland to the other, ſeparated from the Americans by a ridge of hills covered with woods. Very fortunately for the enterpriſe of the Britiſh, one of the American out-guards early fell into the hands of general Clinton. In conſequence of ſome intelligence gained by this accident, he, before day-light on the morning of the twenty-ſeventh of Auguſt, poſſeſſed himſelf of ſome very advantageous heights, and made ſuch a judicious arrangement

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of his troops, as might have inſured ſucceſs, even had the Americans been better prepared for the attack, which at that time was rather unexpected.

The aſſault was begun by the Heſſian general de Heiſter. He opened the cannonade in front of the American lines, early on the morning of the twenty-eighth. A general engagement ſpeedily enſued. Nearly the whole of the Britiſh forces were called into action, under the command of ſir Henry Clinton, earl Percy, and lord Cornwallis. By ſome fatal neglect, a very important poſt was left unguarded by the American, which was ſeized by the Britiſh troops, who fought on this occaſion with a ſpirit and bravery becoming the experienced commander and the hardy veteran. The American troops were early deranged. Apprized of their danger, they with great reſolution endeavoured to recover their camp; but nearly ſurrounded by the Britiſh, and puſhed in the centre by the Heſſians, they were ſo far from effecting their deſign, that their retreat was nearly cut off; yet many of them deſperately fought their way through ſome of the Britiſh lines, and again bravely ſtood on their defence; others entangled in the woods and marſhes through which they endeavoured to eſcape, were either captured, or periſhed in the attempt.

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In the midſt of the general anxiety for the danger and diſtreſs of the little army on Long Iſland, general Waſhington, undoubtedly anxious to retrieve his miſtake in thus expoſing them, paſſed over from New York to endeavour to ſecure the retreat of the ſurviving troops. This was executed in the night of the twenty-ninth, without noiſe or tumult. The remainder of the broken regiments that had outlived the fatal action, abandoned the iſland with a conſiderable part of their baggage, ſome artillery, and military ſtores, and without moleſtation reached the city of New York. They had made a bold and reſolute ſtand, againſt far ſuperior numbers and diſcipline; and it may be deemed fortunate that any of them eſcaped, as on an iſland they might eaſily have been hemmed in by a ſmall number of Britiſh ſhips. Perhaps the commanders on both ſides were afterwards ſenſible of their error, the one in hazarding his troops in ſuch an expoſed ſituation, the other in ſuffering a ſingle American to eſcape either captivity or death.

The loſs of men in this action was not inconſiderable on either ſide, but it fell moſt heavily on the Americans. Many brave men periſhed by the ſword, others, as was obſerved, were loſt in the moraſſes and ſwamps to which they had fled on the defeat. Three general officers, and a large number of inferior rank, were made priſoners. A regiment of valiant young men

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from Maryland, many of them of family and fortune, commanded by the gallant colonel Smallwood, were almoſt to a man cut off. The misfortune of the day was ſeverely felt by them, but without checking the ardor of the American army, the people, or the continental congreſs. The ſame uniform dignity, and unruffled ſuperiority of mind, appeared in the judicious determinations of the united delegates, in the conduct of the ſtate departments, and in the ſubſequent firmneſs of moſt of the military officers, as before this defeat. But the ſucceſs of their arms, and the acquiſition of Long Iſland, exhilarated the ſpirits of the Britiſh, and gave hopes of more compliant diſpoſitions, and a more ready acquieſcence in the requiſitions of miniſters, or the *veto* of kings: and that the buſineſs of the commiſſioners might now be brought forward without farther impediment.

Not many days after the retreat from Long Iſland, congreſs was called upon to exhibit a new proof of their firmneſs. General Sullivan, one of the captured officers, was diſpatched on parole with a meſſage to that aſſembly, in the joint names of lord and general Howe. The purport of the meſſage was, that they had full powers, and that they were diſpoſed to treat on terms of accommodation and peace. At the ſame time they intimated, that as congreſs was not conſidered in the eye of majeſty, as a legal aſſembly, they only deſired a private conference

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with a few individuals belonging to that body, in the character and capacity of private gentlemen. To this extraordinary requeſt, which threw them into a very delicate ſituation, congreſs replied, that as delegates of a free and independent people, they could with no propriety ſend any of the members of congreſs in a private capacity, on an errand ſo replete with public conſequences; but they would depute a committee from their body, to inquire by what authority and on what terms, his lordſhip and brother were empowered to negociate.

The inſidious meſſage received had no tendency to eradicate the previous opinion of congreſs, that this was but a miniſterial pretext to palliate their injurious deſigns. They were convinced, that the commiſſion of the agents was derogatory to the great national councils, and to that high authority which had veſted the Britiſh commiſſioners with no powers, but to pardon thoſe who deemed themſelves guiltleſs, and with no conciliatory propoſals at which freemen would not ſpurn, unleſs driven to deſpair. Yet they condeſcended ſo far to this political trifling, as to depute a very reſpectable committee to meet lord Howe, and confer on the ſubject. The celebrated doctor Franklin, the honorable Mr. Rutledge of South Carolina, and John Adams, Eſq. of the Maſſachuſetts,

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were the perſons choſen for this ſingular interview.

On a ſtipulated day they met his lordſhip on Staten Iſland, accompanied only by Mr. Strachey his ſecretary. He received them with much civility, but converſed equivocally; and though careful not to be explicit, it did not require the penetration of men of far leſs ſuperior abilities, to diſcover that he was reſtricted to very narrow limits, for a negociator between contending nations. It was evident that he had no plan of accommodation, or any propoſals for amity, on any terms but thoſe of abſolute and unconditional ſubmiſſion. Yet theſe gentlemen patiently attended to the circumvolutions of his lordſhip, who obſerved neither preciſion or perſpicuity in his modes of converſing; nor could he diſguiſe an apparent embarraſſment, under the diſplay of affability and good humor. It was even painful to ſee a Britiſh nobleman, endowed with talents for the moſt honorable employments, thus reduced to act under a veil of intrigue, inconſiſtent with the character of the gentleman or the man of buſineſs.*

This conference continued three or four hours, when a ſhort and frugal repaſt conclu-

* The above detail of the interview on Staten Iſland, was ſoon after verbally related to the author of theſe annals, by one of the committee of conference.

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ded a negociation that had fed many well-meaning people with deluſory hopes, and for ſeveral months had been the ſubject of political ſpeculation both in Europe and America. This ſingular interview had indeed little other effect, than, on the one ſide, to rivet that ſtrong diſguſt which before exiſted, againſt the treacherous councils of the Britiſh miniſtry and parliament, and on the other, to convince more perfectly the agents of monarchy, of the determined ſpirit of America, and the ability of the men with whom ſhe had entruſted the ſecurity of her rights. However, when the parties took leave of each other, it was not without ſome tender emotions. Dr. Franklin had been in long habits of friendſhip and intimacy with lord Howe. They had in England frequently converſed, and afterwards correſponded, on the parliamentary diſpute with America. Their regard for each other was mutual, and as there was now every reaſon to ſuppoſe, this would be the laſt perſonal interview between them, the idea was painful, that this political ſtorm might ſweep away all remains of private friendſhip.*

* In the familiar converſation between lord Howe and doctor Franklin, his lordſhip expreſſed a regard for the Americans, and the pain he felt for their approaching ſufferings. Doctor Franklin, in his eaſy, ſententious manner, thanked him for his regards, and aſſured him, that "the "Americans would ſhew their gratitude, by endeavouring "to leſſen as much as poſſible, all pain he might feel on "their account, by exerting their utmoſt abilities in taking "good care of themſelves."

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It was not long after all ideas of negociation were relinquiſhed, before the commiſſioners and their ſovereign had the moſt poſitive proofs, that though the villages might be diſtained with the crimſon tide that threatened to deluge the land, yet freedom in her laſt aſylum, would reſiſt the deſigns of all who had ſighed for her annihilation, to the laſt moment of her exiſtence.

The late defeat of the Americans, and the entire poſſeſſion of Long Iſland, threw accumulated advantages into the hand of the Britiſh commander, who made immediate preparation to attack, and take poſſeſſion of the city of New York. In conſequence of theſe movements, general Waſhington, adviſed by the moſt judicious of his officers,* thought it prudent to evacuate the city without further delay. It would indeed have been madneſs to have attempted a longer defence with his diminiſhed numbers, againſt a potent army fluſhed with recent ſucceſs. The American army was drawn off from above Kingſbridge, on the twenty-firſt of October, but a day before the Britiſh took poſſeſſion of the city. General Waſhington encamped his retreating troops on the heights of Haerlem, about nine miles diſtance from Kingſ-

* General Lee particularly, who had juſt arrived from Georgia. He, by urging this advice, may be ſaid to ſhare in the merit of ſaving the American army.

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bridge. When general Howe took poſſeſſion of the evacuated poſt, he muſt from this event undoubtedly have felt ſome conſolation for the mortification he had ſuffered on recollecting the circumſtances of his flight from Boſton. The alternate triumph or chagrin, from the uncertain chances and events of war, are generally of ſhort duration: the Americans, now in their turn experienced the pains of anxiety, diſappointment, and want, through a rapid flight from poſt to poſt, before a victorious army, who deſpiſed their weakneſs, and ridiculed their want of diſcipline.

General Howe placed a ſtrong detachment in the garriſon for the defence of the city of New York, and immediately marched with the main body of his army in purſuit of Waſhington. He croſſed Eaſt River, ſeized a point of land near Weſt Cheſter, and made himſelf maſter of the lower road to Connecticut, with deſign to impede the intercourſe between the northern and ſouthern ſtates. By this movement, he alſo hoped to impel the American commander, at every hazard, to riſk an engagement that might probably have been deciſive. But general Waſhington was too well acquainted with human nature, to ſuffer his troops, though ardent for action, and impatient of delay, to truſt to the impulſe of conſtitutional courage, and expoſe the reputation of the American arms, and the deciſion of the great conteſt,

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to the uncertain events of a day, under the preſent diſadvantages of number and diſcipline. A ſecond defeat in ſo ſhort a time, would undoubtedly have ſpread diſmay, and perhaps a defection that might have been fatal to the independence of America.* He was ſenſible his troops, though naturally brave, were not ſufficiently inured to danger, and hardened by experience, to raiſe the mind to that ſublime pitch of enthuſiaſm and inflexibility, neceſſary to ſtand their ground againſt ſuperior ſtrength, diſcipline, and numbers. He therefore determined, by cautious and guarded marches, to keep in flank with the Britiſh army, until circumſtances might put it in his power to combat on more equal terms.

He placed a ſtrong party in fort Waſhington, a fortreſs near Kingſbridge, which, though well provided, was at the time judged not tenable by ſome of his beſt officers. This opinion was over-ruled, and between three and four thouſand men were left there. This was conſidered by many a ſecond fatal miſtake of the renowned

* This opinion was corroborated by the behaviour of the Americans, when the Britiſh landed from Kepp's Bay, Sept. 15. They diſcovered a timidity that nothing can excuſe, but their recent ſufferings on Long Iſland, their inferior numbers, and their dread of the ſuperior diſcipline of Britiſh troops.

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Waſhington.* With the remainder of the army the commander in chief decamped, and moved towards the high grounds on the upper road to Boſton. The poſſeſſion of this part of the country was an important object; of conſequence, the Americans were cloſely purſued by general Howe, who did not yet relinquiſh his hopes of a deciſive action.

Frequent ſkirmiſhes had taken place on the *route*, without material advantages on either ſide; but on the twenty-eighth of October, the Britiſh overtook the American army near the White Plains, thirty miles diſtant from New York city, when an action of moment enſued. The attack was begun by the Heſſians, the forlorn hope of the Britiſh army. They were commanded by general de Heiſter and colonel Rhal. Equal reſolution animated both parties, and a conſiderable ſlaughter among the troops on both ſides took place.† The Americans unable to bear theſe loſſes, fully appriſed of the ſtrength of their enemy, and that reinforcements had recently arrived under lord Percy, both the American commander and the army,

* General Waſhington, however, was undoubtedly adviſed to this ſtep, by ſeveral of his beſt officers.

† Among the ſlain was the valiant colonel Smallwood, whoſe regiment was nearly cut to pieces in the action on Long Iſland.

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were equally willing to take a more diſtant poſition.

The Britiſh army had gained ſeveral very important advantages, among which was the command of the river Brunx, which was paſſed by colonel Rhal, who by this means acquired a very important poſt, which enabled him eſſentially to annoy the American army.

The action on the White Plains was a well-fought battle on both ſides; but the Americans had neither the numbers, the experience, nor the equipments for war, at that time, which rendered them equally able to cope with the ſtrength, the numbers, the preparation, and the valor of the Britiſh army, under officers whoſe trade had long been that of war. And though the American commander made his eſcape with his ſmall armament, and retreated with all the prudence and firmneſs of a general who had been longer tried in the field of action, the Britiſh had certainly a right in this affair, to boaſt a complete victory.*

After the engagement, general Waſhington found it neceſſary to quit the field. He drew

* The town of White-Plains was ſet on fire after the action, and all the houſes and forage near the lines burnt. This the Britiſh writers charge to the account of the American commander.

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back in the night to his entrenchments, and the next day took poſſeſſion of ſome higher grounds, about the diſtance of two miles.

General Howe, after parading a few days near the late ſcene of action, and indiſcriminately plundering the neighbourhood, ordered his tents to be ſtruck, and a movement of his whole army to be made towards New York. As his troops had long been kept in continual motion, were fatigued and haraſſed by ſudden alarms, and the ſeaſon far advanced, it was rationally concluded, that his deſign was to repair immediately to winter-quarters. But by a ſtroke of generalſhip, little expected where no remarkable ſuperiority in military knowledge had yet been diſcovered, affairs took a moſt unfavorable-turn for the Americans, and reduced the little, reſolute continental army to dangers and diſtreſſes, to exertions and vigor, ſcarcely to be paralleled in hiſtory.

The numbers that had already fallen on both ſides, by the rapid movements and frequent ſkirmiſhes for the ſpace of three or four months, cannot be aſcertained with exactitude. It was computed that not leſs than five thouſand, principally Heſſians, either periſhed or deſerted from the miniſterial army, after the action of Long Iſland to the middle of November, when general Howe laid the eſtimate before lord

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George Germaine.* The Americans undoubtedly ſuffered in more than equal proportion, and from many cauſes were much leſs able to bear the reduction. The peculiar mode of raiſing troops hitherto adopted by the United States, had a tendency to retard the operations of war, and in ſome meaſure to defeat the beſt concerted plans, either for enterpriſe or defence. The ſeveral colonies had furniſhed their quota of men for a limited term only; and the country unuſed to ſtanding armies, and the control of military power, impatient at the ſubordination neceſſary in a camp, and actuated by a ſtrong ſenſe of the liberty of the individual, each one had uſually returned to his habitation at the expiration of his term of ſervice, in ſpite of every danger that threatened the whole. This had occaſioned frequent calls on the militia of the country, in aid of the army thus weakened, and kept in continual fluctuation by raw recruits, raiſed and ſent on for a few months at a time.

In addition to theſe embarraſſments, animoſities had ſometimes ariſen between the ſouthern and eaſtern troops, occaſioned by the revival of ſome old *local* prejudices. The ariſtocratic ſpirit

* In general Howe's letter to the ſecretary for American affairs, he acknowledged he had loſt upwards of three hundred ſtaff and other officers, and between four and five thouſand privates.

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that had been formerly characteriſtic of the ſouth, frequently appeared in airs of aſſumed ſuperiority, very diſguſting to the feelings of their eaſtern brethren, the bold and hardy New Englanders; the *full-blooded* Yankees, as they ſometimes boaſted themſelves; who, having few ſlaves at their command, had always been uſed to more equality of condition, both in rank, fortune, and education. Theſe trivial cauſes ſometimes raiſed animoſities to ſuch a height, that in the preſent circumſtances of the army, the authority of the commander in chief was ſcarcely ſufficient to reſtrain them.

General Waſhington was alſo obliged often in his retreat through the Jerſies, to preſs for proviſions, forage, and clothing, in a manner new to the inhabitants of America; who, as their misfortunes ſeemed to thicken, grew more remiſs for a time, in voluntary aids to the army. Their grain was ſeized and threſhed out for the uſe of the troops, their blankets, proviſions, &c, forcibly taken from their houſes, with a promiſe of payment in paper bills, when the exigencies of the country ſhould permit: but it always appeared to the people the act of ſome ſubordinate officers, rather than the order of the commander in chief. Thus was his popularity kept up; and thus were the inhabitants of the Jerſies plundered by each party; while many of them diſaffected to both, were uncertain on which ſide to declare.

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General Howe, well acquainted with theſe embarraſſing circumſtances, and apprized that Congreſs were taking meaſures to remedy the evils in future, wiſely judged, that as he could not force Waſhington to a general engagement, it would be more advantageous for the preſent, to ſuſpend his purſuit, and diſlodge the Americans from their ſtrong holds in the environs of New York. He was too ſenſible from the cauſes above related, that the continental army would diminiſh of itſelf, as ſoon as the term of their enliſtment expired. From theſe conſiderations, he drew back his army, with the determination to inveſt fort Waſhington immediately.* This fortreſs on the one ſide of the North River, and fort Lee on the oppoſite ſhore, commanded the whole navigation of the river, at the ſame time that it impeded the communication with New York by land.

General Waſhington could not rationally ſuppoſe, that a poſt of ſo much importance would remain long unmoleſted, or that the garriſon could be defended againſt the whole force of the Britiſh army. General Lee afterwards boaſted in a letter to a friend, that he had adviſed the evacuation of both fort Waſhington and fort Lee, previous to the main body of the American army leaving the neighbourhood of New

* Near Kingſbridge, fifteen miles from the city of New York.

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York. However this might have been, it was indeed a great miſtake that it was not done; general Waſhington might then have had the aſſiſtance of the brave men who fell there.*

General Knyphauſen with ſix battalions, ſuddenly croſſed the country from Rochelle to Kingſbridge, where, joined by the light infantry and grenadiers, the one commanded by lord Cornwallis, the other by earl Percy, the fort was on all ſides attacked with vigor, and defended with bravery. On the ſixteenth of November, colonel Magaw the commanding officer, was ſummoned to ſurrender without farther delay. He requeſted that he might be al

* An officer of the army wrote to general Lee after the ſurrender of fort Waſhington, and expreſſed himſelf thus: "We have all additional reaſons for moſt earneſtly wiſhing "to have you where the principal ſcene of action is laid. "I have no doubt had you been here, the garriſon of "Mount Waſhington would now have compoſed a part of "this army; every gentleman of the family, the officers "and ſoldiers generally, have a confidence in you; the en- "emy conſtantly inquire where you are, and ſeem to me "to be leſs confident when you are preſent. We are in- "formed by an officer lately liberated, that the enemy have "a ſouthern expedition in view; that they hold us very "cheap in conſequence of the late affair at Mount Waſh- "ington, where both the plan of defence and execution "were contemptible: if a real defence of the lines was in- "tended, the number was too few; if the fort only, the "garriſon was too numerous by half."

Extract from general Reed to general Lee.

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lowed to conſider till nine o'clock the next morning, before he gave a deciſive anſwer. It was replied, that two hours only were granted. At the expiration of this ſhort *parley*, the adjutant general of the Britiſh army, who waited the reply, was informed, that the fort would be defended to the laſt moment. Accordingly a reſiſtance was made with aſtoniſhing valor for ſeveral hours; but to prevent the farther effuſion of blood, the Americans yielded to neceſſity, and ſurrendered themſelves priſoners of war, at the moment when the Heſſian and Britiſh troops were on the point of ſtorming the garriſon.

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Near three thouſand continental troops were loſt by this diſaſter. Theſe unhappy victims of war, notwithſtanding the inclemency of the ſeaſon, were ſtripped of their apparel and thrown naked into the jails of New York; where, after ſuffering the extremes of miſery from cold, hunger, and ſickneſs, moſt of them periſhed. The remnant who eſcaped immediate death, were after ſome months impriſonment, ſent on parole to viſit their friends, many of them infected with the ſmall-pox, and all of them in ſuch a languiſhing, emaciated condition, as proved a uſeful leſſon to their countrymen; who, by this inſtance of ſeverity towards the brave and unfortunate, were univerſally convinced, that death in the field of battle, was much to be preferred to the cruelties they had

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reaſon to expect, if they fell into Britiſh hands, though a nation once famed for the virtues of juſtice, generoſity, and clemency.

After the ſurrender of fort Waſhington, no time was loſt; the advantages gained by the Britiſh troops were puſhed with ſpirit. With the utmoſt eaſe they took poſſeſſion of fort Lee: the American garriſon fled on the firſt apprehenſion of an attack, without offering the ſmalleſt reſiſtance. General Howe embraced theſe favorable circumſtances to proſecute his deſigns, ſtimulated by the hope of reaching and ſurpriſing Philadelphia, before the American army could be reinforced. Thus, near the cloſe of the campaign, when the continental troops were daily dropping off, and a ſevere winter ſetting in, he had every reaſon to cheriſh his moſt ſanguine hopes. He for ſome time puſhed his purpoſes with vigor and alacrity, and obliged general Waſhington with an handful of men, to retreat from town to town, until hunted through the ſtate of New Jerſey, and even over the Delaware, which he had time to croſs only ſix hours before the whole body of the Britiſh army, conſiſting of ten or twelve thouſand men, were on the oppoſite banks.

The reaſons why general Howe did not ſooner overtake the diſtreſſed fugitives, or why he cantoned his troops, without croſſing the river and taking poſſeſſion of the city of Philadelphia, re-

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main yet to be inveſtigated. The retreat was conducted with ability, but the remnant that eſcaped was too ſmall to intimidate the enemy, or to encourage the friends of the American cauſe. A great part of the inhabitants of the city, either from fear, affection, or intereſt, were at that time diſpoſed to receive with open arms the Britiſh commander; and the conſternation of all parties operated in favor of erecting the king's ſtandard in the capital of America.

Congreſs, by advice of ſome military characters, precipitately removed to Baltimore, in the ſtate of Maryland. The public concern was alſo heightened at this critical period, by the recent capture of general Lee. He had been collecting a number of militia in the neighbourhood of Morriſtown, with a deſign to fall on the rear of the Britiſh army, while in chaſe of Waſhington through the Jerſies. It is not known why he was thus unguarded, but he incautiouſly lodged at the little village of Baſkenridge, four miles from the troops he had collected, and about twenty from the Britiſh army. Here he was betrayed, ſurpriſed, and taken priſoner. Colonel Harcourt of the light horſe, conducted the enterpriſe with ſo much addreſs, that with a very ſmall party, he without noiſe paſſed all the American guards on his way, ſurrounded the houſe, and took poſſeſſion of his priſoner without the ſmalleſt reſiſtance. In the hurry of the buſineſs, Lee was not ſuffered to take

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either hat or cloak, and thus in a ruffian-like manner, was he conducted to the Britiſh head-quarters. CHAP. IX. 1776.

A peculiar triumph was enjoyed by his enemies in the capture of this ſingle officer. They conſidered his ſervices at that period, of the greateſt conſequence to the American army: in addition to this, he was viewed as a rebel to the ſovereign of Britain in a double ſenſe, both as a deſerter from the king's ſervice, in which he had long held an honorable rank, and as an abettor of the American defection, and one of the firſt officers in their army: he was of courſe confined in the ſtricteſt manner, and threatened with military execution as a traitor to the king. The Americans at that time had no Britiſh priſoners of equal rank, yet they made the moſt ſtrenuous efforts for his releaſe. A colonel Campbell with five Heſſian field-officers, were ſoon after offered for the exchange of general Lee: when this was refuſed, general Waſhington advertiſed ſir William Howe, that their blood muſt atone for his life, if Lee fell a ſacrifice to the reſentment of his enemies.

Humanity recoils at the ſufferings of individuals, who by the laws of retaliation, are deemed the legal victims of policy; but though the mind of the gentle may be wounded by the neceſſity, habit, in time, too often learns it to ac-

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quieſce in the cruel policy of nations. Public emergencies may require the hand of ſeverity to fall heavily on thoſe who are not perſonally guilty, but compaſſion prompts, and ever urges to milder methods. However, general Lee was not executed, nor ſuddenly releaſed. Colonel Campbell was cloſely impriſoned, and treated with much ſeverity, and a conſiderable time elapſed before either of them were relieved, except by ſome mitigation in the manner of colonel Campbell's confinement, which was carried to an extreme not warranted even to a notorious felon.*

Perhaps at no period of the great ſtruggle for independence, were the affairs of the United States at ſo low an ebb as at the preſent. The footſteps of the Britiſh army in their route through the Jerſies, were every where marked with the moſt wanton inſtances of rapine and bloodſhed: even the ſacred repoſitories of the dead were not unmoleſted by the ſacrilegious hands of the ſoldiery;† while the licentiouſneſs

* General Lee was alſo treated very ſeverely until the defeat of Burgoyne. After this he was permitted to repair to New York on parole, and ſoon after liberated by an exchange of priſoners.

† This uſage of the dead is authenticated by the accounts of ſeveral gentlemen of reſpectability near the ſcene of action.

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of their officers ſpread rape, miſery, and deſpair, indiſcriminately through every village.

Thus, while human nature was diſgraced, and the feelings of benevolence ſhocked, by the perpetration of every crime; when the army ſpared neither age or ſex, youth, beauty, or innocence; it is obſervable, that the diſtreſſes of war had fallen principally on that ſtate, which at that time contained a greater proportion of perſons attached to the royal cauſe, than could have been found in any other part of America. But ſo intermixed and blended were perſons, families, and parties of different political opinions, that it was not eaſy to diſtinguiſh, in the wanton riot of victory, their friends from their foes, or the royaliſts from the whigs, even had the royal army been diſpoſed to diſcriminate. It was indeed impoſſible for their foreign auxiliaries to make any diſtinction among Americans, though ſome Britiſh officers would gladly have checked the inſolence of triumph, unbalanced by any principle of religion, honor, or humanity. A neglect of ſtrict diſcipline prevented the melioration of crime and miſery, and filled up the meaſure of cenſure which afterwards fell on the commander in chief of the Britiſh forces, even from thoſe who wiſhed to give his military operations the moſt brilliant caſt.*

* See ſir William Howe's defence of his conduct in his letters to adminiſtration, publiſhed in London.

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Had general Howe perſevered in his purſuit, and have croſſed the Delaware, he would inevitably have deſtroyed even the veſtige of an American army. The remnant of the old troops drawn into Philadelphia, was too ſmall for reſiſtance, the citizens were divided and intimidated, congreſs had retreated to Baltimore, the country was diſpirited, and Waſhington himſelf, ready to deſpair, had actually conſulted ſome of his officers, on the expediency of flying to the back parts of Pennſylvania, or even beyond the Allegany mountains, to eſcape the uſual fate of unſucceſsful rebels, or as himſelf expreſſed it, "to ſave his neck from a halter."*

Thus, without an army, without allies, and without reſources, the gloom of diſappointment overſpread not only the brow of the commander in chief, but expanded wide, and ruin from every quarter lowered on the face of American freedom. Newport and the adja-

* This was confidentially ſaid to an officer, who reported, that the general put his hand to his neck, and obſerved, that it did not feel as if made for a halter. *See Stedman's Hiſtory.* It is probable if ever general Waſhington really expreſſed himſelf in this manner, it was uttered more from the momentary ebullition of diſtreſs, than from the ſerious contemplation of deſpair. It diſcovered more a determination to live free, than any timidity from ſudden diſmay. Had general Howe overtaken the American troops, and have ſecured their commander, he would doubtleſs have been made a victim of ſevere vengeance.

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cent iſlands were taken poſſeſſion of by a part of the Britiſh army and navy, under the command of commodore ſir Peter Parker and ſir Henry Clinton. The whole colony of Rhode Iſland was not able to make the ſmalleſt reſiſtance to the ſeizure of their capital: and to complete the climax of danger which this melancholy winter exhibited, the irruptions of the natives in various parts, was not the leaſt. Many tribes of thoſe aborigines, ſtimulated by their native fierceneſs, wrought up ſtill higher by Britiſh influence, and headed by ſome American deſperadoes in the ſervice of Britain, were making the moſt horrid depredations on the back ſettlements of ſome of the ſouthern ſtates: nor did the affairs of America at the northward wear a more favorable aſpect.

General Carleton had conducted the campaign of this year, with the ability of the ſtateſman, and the courage of the ſoldier; and notwithſtanding the ſeverity of his general character, he, with a degree of humanity honorable to himſelf, and exemplary to his military aſſociates, had been diſpoſed to commiſerate the unfortunate. It has been obſerved, that all who fell into his hands after the death of general Montgomery, were treated with lenity and tenderneſs. He was doubtleſs ſenſible, that a war enkindled more to ſatiate a ſpirit of reſent-

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ment and pride, than to eſtabliſh the principles of juſtice, required every palliative to mitigate the odium of the diſgraceful deſign of ſubduing America by the aid of ſavages, who had hutted for ages in the wilderneſs beyond the diſtant lakes. General Carleton with the moſt extraordinary vigilance and vigor, had conducted the purſuit of the Americans, until Arnold and his party were chaſed out of the province of Quebec: nor did he ever loſe ſight of his object, which was to make himſelf maſter of the Hudſon, and form a junction at Albany with general Howe, whoſe troops in detached parties were waſting the middle colonies, and cooperating in the ſame deſign.

By uncommon exertions, Carleton obtained a fleet in the wilderneſs, of ſuch ſtrength and ſuperiority, as to deſtroy the little American ſquadron on the Lake Champlain, one of the ſmaller navigable baſons in the woods of that aſtoniſhing country. The lakes of America are among the wonders of the world. They are numerous and extenſive, deep, and navigable at many hundred miles diſtance from the ocean. A view of this part of creation is ſublime and aſtoniſhing. There are five of thoſe lakes of principal magnitude. The ſmalleſt of them, *Lake Ontario*, is more than two hundred, and the largeſt, *Lake Superior*, is five hundred leagues

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in circumference.* Happy might it have been for the Atlantic ſtates, had they been contented within theſe boundaries of nature, and not at an after period, have waſted the blood of their citizens in attempting to wreſt from the natives a vaſt extent of territory, which it is very improbable they will be long able to govern, unleſs a remarkable coincidence of events ſhould give them a commanding influence, ſuperior to any European power. CHAP. IX. 1776.

The bravery of Arnold was on his retreat, equally conſpicuous with the outſet of his extraordinary undertaking: but notwithſtanding his vigilance, and the valor of his ſoldiers, they were reduced to the utmoſt diſtreſs before he blew up the remainder of his fleet, which Carleton had not captured, and run his laſt ſhip on ſhore, without acknowledging the ſuperiority of the Britiſh flag, by the ſervile ſignal of ſtriking his colors. Obliged to relinquiſh every poſt of advantage, Arnold and the remnant of his troops, were driven naked, defenceleſs, and deſpondent, from foreſt to foreſt, and from lake to lake, until they reached Ticonderoga. The garriſon there had been reinforced by ſome

* The principal of theſe inland ſeas are, Lake Superior, Huron, Michigan, Erie, and Onatria. The deſcription of theſe and the ſmaller ſheets of water ſpread over the vaſt weſtern territory, may be found in every geographical work.

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militia from the eaſtern ſtates, but they were in no condition to meet general Carleton, whoſe advancement they had every reaſon to expect, with ſuperior numbers, and the double advantage of diſcipline and ſucceſs, and his exertions aided by tribes of copper-colored ſavages.

General Thomas had been ſent from Cambridge in the ſpring, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-ſix, with a detachment of the continental army, to endeavour in conjunction with the eaſtern militia, to retrieve the wretched ſtate of affairs in Canada. He was a man of cool judgment, poſſeſſed of courage the reſult of principle, rather than bravery the impulſe of paſſion. He was reſpected by the citizens, beloved by the ſoldiers, and well qualified by the firmneſs of his mind, and the ſtrength of his conſtitution, to face the dangers of a campaign in the wilderneſs. But unfortunately for him, he was deputed to the northern command to oppoſe the conjoined forces of the native barbarians and their Britiſh allies, at a time when the remains of the American army were diſmayed by defeat, worn out by fatigue, and in addition to their diſtreſſes, a peſtilential diſorder, then fatal to New Englanders, had ſpread through the camp. The ſmall-pox, by the ill policy of the country, had been ſo long kept from their doors, that there was ſcarce a man among them, who was not more afraid of an attack from this kind of peſtilence, than the

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fury of the ſword: but no caution could prevent the rapidity of the contagion; it pervaded the whole army; and proved fatal to moſt of the new raiſed troops. CHAP. IX. 1776.

The character of the military officer who dies in his bed, however meritorious, is ſeldom crowned by the *eclat* of fame, which follows the hero who periſhes in the field. Thus this good man, qualified to reap the faireſt laurels in a day of battle, was immediately on his arrival at the ſcene of action, cut down by the hand of ſickneſs, and his memory almoſt extinguiſhed by a ſucceſſion of new characters and events that crowded for attention. By the death of general Thomas, and the reduced ſtate of the Americans, they were far from being in any preparation for the reception of general Carleton, whoſe arrival they momently expected. They had nothing to hope—an immediate ſurrender to mercy was their only reſource. On this they had determined; when to their ſurpriſe and joy they were informed, that all further purſuit was relinquiſhed, and that the Canadians and Britiſh troops had precipitately retreated.

Thus the remnant of the broken continental army was left at full liberty to eſcape in the beſt manner they could from other impending dangers. From the nature of the grounds,

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and from the neighbourhood of the ſavages, from their weak, ſickly, and reduced ſtate, their retreat was extremely difficult; but in ſcattered parties they reached Crown Point in a very feeble condition. After this ſeries of ſucceſsleſs efforts, all farther thoughts of the reduction and conqueſt of Canada, were for the preſent laid aſide. General Carleton had repaired to Quebec. General Phillips with a conſiderable force made winter-quarters at Montreal; and general Burgoyne took paſſage for England. Both theſe officers had been very active in aid of Carleton, through the campaign of one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-ſix.

The defeat of the Americans in Canada, and the advantages gained by the Britiſh arms in the Jerſies, and indeed for ſome months in every other quarter, gave to the royal cauſe an air of triumph. The brilliant hopes formed from theſe circumſtances, by the calculators of events for the enſuing ſpring, led the miniſtry and the army, the nation and their ſovereign, to flatter themſelves that the completion of the war was at no great diſtance; and that only one more campaign would be neceſſary for the entire ſubjugation of America. The viciſſitudes of fortune, that hourly cloud or brighten all human affairs, ſoon convinced them that this was but the triumph of a day. The new year opened in a reverſive view. A ſpirited movement of general Waſhington at this important criſis,

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had a moſt happy effect: a ſingle incident gave a different face to the affairs of the colonies, in a ſhorter time than could have been imagined, after the ruinous appearance of every thing at the cloſe of the campaign.

On the evening of the twenty-fifth of December, general Waſhington in a moſt ſevere ſeaſon, croſſed the Delaware with a part of his army, then reduced to leſs than two thouſand men in the whole. They very unexpectedly landed near Trenton. Colonel Rhal, an officer of decided bravery, commanded a detachment of twelve hundred Heſſians ſtationed there, where they lay in perfect ſecurity. It was near morning before they were alarmed: the ſurpriſe was complete; the reſiſtance ſmall: Rhal was mortally wounded, and his whole corps ſurrendered priſoners of war. After the fatigue, the hazards, and the ſucceſs of the night, general Waſhington with his party and his priſoners, conſiſting of the three regiments of Rhal, Loſbourg, and Knyphauſen, recroſſed the river before eight in the morning, with little or no loſs.

This adventure gave an aſtoniſhing ſpring to the ſpirits of the American army and people, a ſhort time before driven to the brink of deſpair. They had viewed the Heſſians as a moſt terrific enemy, and in conjunction with the veterans of Britain, as an invulnerable foe. To

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ſee ſuch a body of them ſurpriſed in their camp, and yielding themſelves priſoners to the ſhreds of an American army, inſpired them with a boldneſs that an action of the greateſt magnitude might not have awakened in different circumſtances. General Waſhington did not ſit down in Philadelphia ſatisfied with the *eclat* of this enterpriſe, but in a few days again paſſed the Delaware, and took poſt at Trenton.

The Britiſh army elated by ſucceſs, had lain careleſsly cantoned in ſmall diviſions, in a line extending through New Jerſey to New York. General Howe was afterwards ſeverely cenſured by his employers, for his neglect in not croſſing the Delaware, while he had the promiſe of the moſt brilliant ſucceſs from his own arms. The panic of the Pennſylvanians had inſpired moſt of them with a diſpoſition to ſuccumb to any terms he ſhould impoſe, which ought to have been an additional ſtimulus to have purſued his good fortune. Nor was he leſs cenſured for his unguarded cantonments, through ſuch an extenſive line as the whole length of the Jerſies.*

General Waſhington moved on from Trenton to Princetown by a circuitous march, to avoid engaging the Britiſh or being hemmed in near Trenton. He ſuddenly attacked the

* See trial and defence of general Howe.

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Britiſh encampment at Princetown, while the main body of the Britiſh army had marched to Trenton, with deſign to diſlodge the Americans from that poſt. From Princetown the American army moved to Elizabethtown. Animated by ſucceſs, warmed by bravery, and ſupported by fortitude, they gathered ſtrength as they moved, and gained ſome ſignal advantages in ſeveral places on the Jerſey ſide of the river; and in their turn purſued the king's troops, with as much rapidity as they had recently fled before them; while the Britiſh, as if ſeized with a general panic, made but a feeble reſiſtance.

After many marches, counter-marches, and ſkirmiſhes, the ſtrength of the Britiſh force was collected at Brunſwick, a town in the Jerſies, about ſixty miles from Philadelphia, and thirty-five from New York. They continued their head-quarters there the remainder of the winter; but they were not without apprehenſions for the ſafety of their troops and their magazines, even at this diſtance from Philadelphia, notwithſtanding the contempt with which they had but a ſhort time before, viewed the broken, diſheartened remains of a continental army, which they had purſued into the city.

The Britiſh were indeed very far ſuperior to the Americans, in every reſpect neceſſary to

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military operations, except the revivified courage and reſolution, the reſult of ſudden ſucceſs after deſpair. In this, the Americans at the time yielded the palm to none; while the confidence of their antagoniſts apparently diminiſhed, and victory began by them to be viewed at a diſtance.

The waſte of human life from various cauſes, through the viciſſitudes of this winter, was not inconſiderable on either ſide: but the ſucceſs of the American arms through the Jerſies, was in ſome meaſure damped by the death of the brave general Mercer of Virginia, who fell at Princetown, in an action made memorable by the loſs of ſo gallant an officer. His diſtinguiſhed merit was gratefully acknowledged by congreſs, in the proviſion afterwards made for the education and ſupport of the youngeſt ſon of his family.

The fortunate movements of the Americans at this critical era, had the uſual effect on public opinion. Such is human nature, that ſucceſs ever brightens the talents of the fortunate commander, and applauſe generally outruns the expectations of the ambitious. General Waſhington, popular before, from this period became the idol of his country, and the admiration of his enemies. His humanity to the priſoners who fell into his hands, was a contraſt to the ſeverities ſuffered by thoſe captured at

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fort Washington, and the victims in other places, that fell under the power of either Heſſians or Britons. In a book of general orders belonging to colonel Rhal, found after the action at Trenton, it was recorded, that "His "excellency the commander in chief orders, "that all Americans found in arms, not having "an officer with them, ſhall be immediately "hanged."* This inſtance may ſerve as a ſample of the cruel deſigns, and ſummary modes of proceeding to execution among military maſters, who hold themſelves above the cenſure or control of civil authority, or the reſtraints of humanity.

On the contrary, the lenity ſhewn by general Waſhington towards the loyaliſts captured by his ſoldiers, diſarmed the prejudices of many, and multitudes flocked to the American ſtandard, who, in the beginning of the diſpute, were favorers of the royal cauſe, and within a few months had been ready to throw themſelves into the arms of Great Britain. But every favorable impreſſion was eraſed, and every idea of ſubmiſſion annihilated, by the indiſcriminate ravages of the Heſſian and Britiſh ſoldiery in their *route* through the Jerſies. The

* The intimation of lord Cornwallis afterwards, to the commander of a party ſent out, much ſuperior to the Americans they expected to meet, was not more humane. His lordſhip obſerved, that "he wanted no priſoners."

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elegant houſes of ſome of their own moſt devoted partiſans were burnt: their wives and daughters purſued and raviſhed in the woods to which they had fled for ſhelter. Many unfortunate fathers, in the ſtupor of grief, beheld the miſery of their female connexions, without being able to relieve them, and heard the ſhrieks of infant innocence, ſubjected to the brutal luſt of Britiſh grenadiers, or *Heſſian Yaughers*.

In ſhort, it may be difficult for the moſt deſcriptive pen, to portray the ſituation of the inhabitants of the Jerſies, and the neighbourhood of their ſtate. The confuſion of parties, the diſmay of individuals, who were ſtill ſerving in the remnant of the American army, whoſe deareſt connexions were ſcattered through the country, and expoſed to the danger of plunder and miſery, from the hoſtile inroads of a victorious army, can be imagined only by thoſe whoſe ſouls are ſuſceptible at once of the nobleſt and the tendereſt feelings. Many of this deſcription were among the brave officers, who had led the fragments of a fugitive army acroſs the Delaware, and ſheltered in the city of Philadelphia, had by flight eſcaped a total exciſion.

But after eſcaping the perilous purſuit, there appeared little on which to ground any rational

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hope of effectually counteracting the deſigns of their enemies. They found congreſs had retreated, and that the inhabitants of the city were agitated and divided. Several of the more wealthy citizens ſecured their property by renouncing the authority of congreſs, and acknowledging themſelves the ſubjects of the crown: others availed themſelves of a proclamation of pardon, publiſhed by the Britiſh commander, and took protection under the royal ſtandard, for perſonal ſecurity.

Several officers of high character and conſideration, were on the point of purſuing the ſame ſteps, previous to the action at Trenton, from the anxiety they felt for their families, deſpair of the general cauſe, danger of the city, or the immediate military executions that might take place, when the victorious army ſhould croſs the river, which they momently expected. Why this was not done, remains involved among the fortuitous events, which often decide the fate of armies, or of nations, as it were by accident. The votaries of blind chance, or indeed the more ſober calculators on human events, would have pronounced the fortune of the day was in the hands of the Britiſh commander. Why he did not embrace her tenders while it was in his power, no one can tell; nor why he ſtopped ſhort on the borders of the

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river, as if afraid the waters of the Delaware, like another Red Sea, would overwhelm the purſuers of the injured Americans, who had in many inſtances as manifeſtly experienced the protecting hand of Providence, as the favored Iſraelites.

The neglect of ſo fair an opportunity, by a ſingle effort, to have totally deſtroyed or diſperſed the American army, or in the language of adminiſtration, to have cut off the *hydra head* of *rebellion*, by the ſubjugation of the capital city, was viewed in the moſt unpardonable light by his employers. They were not yet fully appriſed of the ſpirit of Americans: their ideas did not quadrate with thoſe of a diſtinguiſhed military officer, well acquainted with the country, who obſerved in a letter to a friend,* "it was no exaggeration to aſſert, that "there were two hundred thouſand ſtrong-"bodied, active yeomanry, ready to encounter "all hazards and dangers, ready to ſacrifice all "conſiderations, rather than ſurrender a tittle "of the rights which they have derived from "God and their anceſtors." Subſequent events will prove that he had not formed a miſtaken opinion of the reſolution and proweſs of the Americans. It will be ſeen, that they were far

* See a letter from general Charles Lee to the duke of Richmond, October, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-four.

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from relinquiſhing their claim to independence, by the ill ſucceſs of a ſingle campaign. The tardy conduct of ſir William Howe was reprehended with ſeverity; nor was he ever able to juſtify or vindicate himſelf, either to adminiſtration or to the world.

From theſe and other circumſtances, the character of ſir William Howe depreciated in proportion to the riſing fame of the American commander in chief, his rival in glory, and his competitor for the crown of victory, on a theatre that ſoon excited the curioſity, and awakened the ambition of the heroes and princes of Europe.

Indeed it muſt be acknowledged, that general Howe had innumerable difficulties to ſurmount, notwithſtanding the number of his troops. He was at a diſtance from his employers, who were ignorant of his ſituation, and unable to ſupport him as emergencies required. He was in an enemy's country, where every acquiſition of forage or proviſions, was procured at the expenſe or hazard of life or reputation. A conſiderable part of his army was compoſed of diſcontented foreigners, who, diſappointed of the eaſy ſettlements they had been led to expect, from the conqueſt of rebels, and the forfeiture of their eſtates,—their former poverty not mitigated, nor their yoke of ſlavery meliorated, in the ſervice of their new maſ-

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ters,—they were clamorous for pay, and too eager for plunder, to be kept within the rules of diſcipline: and their alien language and manners diſguſting to their Britiſh comrades, a conſtant bickering was kept up between them.

Nor was the Britiſh commander leſs embarraſſed by the tories, who from every ſtate had fled from the reſentment of their countrymen, and hung upon his hands for ſubſiſtence. On their fidelity or their information, he could make little dependence. Many of them had never poſſeſſed property at all, others irritated by the loſs of wealth; both were continually urging him to deeds of cruelty, to which he did not ſeem naturally inclined. At the ſame time, he was ſenſible that the hopes of his nation would ſink by the protraction of a war, which they had flattered themſelves might be concluded with the utmoſt facility and expedition.

There were many concurring circumſtances to lead the world to conclude, that ſir William Howe was not qualified, either by education or habits of life, for the execution of an object of ſuch magnitude, as the reſtoration of the revolted colonies to obedience, and dependence on the crown of Britain. "He fought as a ſol-"dier and a ſervant to his king, without other "principle than that of paſſive obedience. The "immenſity of the proſpect before him, em-"barraſſed his mind, clouded his underſtand-

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" ing; and, too much engroſſed by his bottle " and his miſtreſs, he frequently left his orders " and his letters to be fabricated by ſubordinate " officers: and ſeemed at ſome times to ſink " into ſtupor or indolence, at others, brave and " cool as Julius Cæſar."

If theſe traits of the character of the Britiſh commander are juſt and impartial, as ſaid to be by one of his former aſſociates,* the world need be at no loſs why ſuch inſtances of ſhameful outrage and rapine appeared wherever his army entered; or why, when he had driven the Americans over the Delaware, he did not purſue and complete the buſineſs, by a triumphal entrance into Philadelphia, and the total deſtruction of general Waſhington and his remaining troops.

No military character ever had a fairer opportunity (as obſerved above) to place the martial laurel on his brow, than was preſented to general Howe on the banks of the Delaware; but he ſuffered it to wave at a diſtance, without the reſolution to ſeize it: and inſtead of a chaplet of glory, he reaped only the hatred of America, the loſs of eſteem and reputation in England, and diſgrace and cenſure from his parliamentary maſters.

* See letter of general Lee, Appendix, Note No. XVIII, which diſcovers the temper and character of the writer, as well as of ſir William Howe.

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The negligence of ſir William Howe gave an opportunity to the Americans, to recover the energies of their former courage. The hopeleſs proſpect that had beclouded their minds, vaniſhed on the ſucceſsful termination of a ſingle enterpriſe projected by the commander in chief, and executed with reſolution and magnanimity, by officers who had been almoſt reduced to deſpondency.

The ſurpriſe of Trenton ſaved the army, the city, and in ſome degree, the reputation of the commander in chief, which frequently depends more on the fortunate exigencies of a moment than on ſuperior talents. The world ever prone to neglect the unfortunate, however brave, amiable, or virtuous, generally pays its idolatrous homage to thoſe elevated by the favors of the ideal deity to the pinnacle of honor: yet real merit uſually commands the plaudit of poſterity, however it may be withheld by contemporaries, from rivalry or envy.

Perhaps there are no people on earth, in whom a ſpirit of enthuſiaſtic zeal is ſo readily enkindled, and burns ſo remarkably conſpicuous, as among the Americans. Any fortuitous circumſtance, that holds out the moſt diſtant promiſe of a completion of their wiſhes, is puſhed with an ardor and unanimity that ſeldom fails of ſucceſs. This characteriſtic trait may in ſome meaſure account for the rapidity

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with which every thing has been brought to maturity there, from the firſt ſettlement of the colonies. CHAP. IX. 1776.

The energetic operation of this ſanguine temper, was never more remarkably exhibited, than in the change inſtantaneouſly wrought in the minds of men, by the capture of Trenton at ſo unexpected a moment. From a ſtate of mind bordering on deſpair, courage was invigorated, every countenance brightened, and the nervous arm was outſtretched, as if by one general impulſe, all were determined to drive the hoſtile invaders, that had plundered their villages, and dipt the remorſeleſs ſword in the boſom of the innocent victims of their fury, from off the American ſhores.

But we ſhall ſee in the ſubſequent pages of theſe memoirs, that they had yet many years to ſtruggle with the dangers, the chances, and the miſeries of war, before an extenſive country, convulſed in every part, was reſtored to tranquillity. Agonizing amidſt the complicated difficulties of raiſing, paying, and keeping an army in the field, it is eaſy to conceive it was not with much facility, that money was drawn from the pockets of the rich, for the ſupport of the public cauſe, at the hazard of receiving a ſcrip of depreciated paper, in lieu of ſilver and gold.

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A nominal ſubſtitute for ſpecie has often its temporary advantages, and when not extended too far, its permanent ones; but is oftener attended with a great balance of evil. Its deceptive value often plunges a great part of the community into ruin, and corrupts the morals of the people before they are apprehenſive of the danger. Yet without the expedient of a paper currency, the Americans could never have ſupported an army, or have procured the neceſſaries of life from day to day. Experience had before taught them the pernicious effects of a paper medium, without funds ſufficient for its redemption; but the peculiar exigencies of their ſituation, left them no other reſources.

The United States had engaged in an hazardous enterprize, in which all was at ſtake. Deficient as they were in the means neceſſary to ſupport a war, againſt a wealthy and potent nation, they yet ſtood alone, uncertain whether any other power would aid their cauſe, or view them with that degree of conſideration, that might obtain a credit for foreign loans. It was an intereſting ſpectacle to all ſuch nations as had colonies of their own, to view ſuch an unexpected ſpirit of reſiſtance and revolt in the Americans, as might be contagious, and probably produce commotions as much to be dreaded by them, as the alienation of the thirteen colonies was by England. The moſt judicious ſtateſmen

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in America were ſenſible, that much time muſt elapſe, and many events take place, before any foreign ſtipulations could be effected. They were therefore impelled by the peculiar circumſtances of their ſituation, to reſort to this dangerous expedient, or relinquiſh the conteſt. No wiſe legiſlator, no experienced ſtateſman, no man of principle, would have recourſe to a meaſure fraught with ſuch uncertain conſequences, but from that neceſſity which in human affairs, ſometimes precludes all deliberation between preſent utility, and diſtant events which may accrue.

In conſequence of this dilemma, congreſs had emitted ſums to a vaſt amount in paper bills, with a promiſe on the face of the bill, of payment in ſpecie at ſome diſtant period. This circumſtance was alarming to the avaricious and the wealthy, who immediately withdrew their gold and ſilver from circulation. This and other combining circumſtances, among which the immenſe ſums counterfeited in New York by the Britiſh, and thrown into the colonies, produced an immediate and an aſtoniſhing depreciation. At the ſame time, the widow and the orphan were obliged to receive the intereſt of their property, depoſited for ſecurity in the public treaſuries, according to the nominal ſum on the face of the bills; by which they and other claſſes, were reduced to

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extreme neceſſity. The operative effects of this paper medium, its uſes, its depreciation, and total annihilation, will be ſeen hereafter, when the credit of the circulating paper had ſunk ſo low, that no one preſumed to offer it in barter for any commodity. All public demands were conſolidated by government at a very great diſcount, and public ſecurities given to thoſe who had demands for ſervices or loans, and the faith of congreſs pledged for their payment in full value, as ſoon as practicable.*

The honor and the fate of the commander in chief, had been daily hazarded by the unreſtrained licenſe of ſoldiers, with whom it was optional to ſtay a few days longer, or to withdraw after the ſhort term of their enliſtment had expired, however imminent the dangers might be that threatened their country. Yet the eſtabliſhment of a permanent army was not more ardently wiſhed by general Waſhington, than by every judicious man in America: but the work, though not inſurmountable, was attended with complicated difficulties. The reluctance felt through that claſs of men from which an army was to be drawn, to enliſt for an indefinite term, was apparent to all. The precarious reſources for the ſupport of an army, which at that time depended

* See Appendix, Note No. XIX

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only on a depreciating medium, could not be concealed, and were diſcouraging indeed: at the ſame time, it was a ſubject too delicate to expatiate on, as the more it was converſed upon, the greater was the danger of defeating the deſired object. But, the firmneſs of congreſs unſhaken, and the legiſlatures of the individual ſtates equally zealous, while the people at large were convinced of the utility of the meaſure, the object was in time obtained, though not ſo rapidly as the exigencies of the day required.

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CHAPTER X.

Deſultory Circumſtances.—Skirmiſhes and Events.—General Howe withdraws from the Jerſies—Arrives at the River Elk—Followed by Waſhington.—The Battle of Brandywine.—General Waſhington defeated, retreats to Philadelphia—Obliged to draw off his Army.—Lord Cornwallis takes Poſſeſſion of the City.—Action at Germantown, Red Bank, &c.—The Britiſh Army take Winter-Quarters in Philadelphia.—The Americans encamp at Valley-Forge.—General Waſhington's Situation not eligible.—De Liſle's Letters.—General Conway reſigns.—The Baron de Steuben appointed Inſpector General of the American Army.

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IN the beginning of the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-ſeven, the ſpirits of the Americans were generally re-animated by freſh hopes, in conſequence of the meaſures taken by congreſs to eſtabliſh a permanent army, until the concluſion of the war, and ſtill more by their ſanguine expectations of ſucceſs from the negociations, and proſpects of an alliance with France.

A ſolemn confederation, conſiſting of a number of articles by which the United States ſhould in future be governed, had been drafted, diſcuſſed, and unanimouſly ſigned by all the delegates in congreſs, in the month of October, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-ſix. This inſtrument was ſent to each legiſla-

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ture in the thirteen ſtates, and approved and afterwards ratified by the individual governments. After this, the congreſs of the United States thought proper to appoint commiſſioners to the court of France, when fortunately a loan of money was negociated on the faith of the United States, and permiſſion obtained for the reception of American ſhips of war, and the ſale of prizes that might be captured by them, and carried into any of the ports of France. They were alſo encouraged to hope for ſtill further aſſiſtance from the generoſity of that nation.

The growth of the infant marine of the United States had been ſo rapid, and ſo ſucceſsful had been the adventurers in this early ſtage of the war, that it was rationally concluded, it could not be many years before the navy of America might make a reſpectable figure among the nations.

It was not expected in Great Britain, that the colonies could thus early have acquired a naval force of the leaſt conſideration. In conſequence of this idea, a great number of Britiſh ſhips and tranſports, that went out ſlightly armed, or not armed at all, were this year captured on their way to America. So bold and adventurous were the American privateers, and their public ſhips, that the domeſtic trade of Britain was rendered inſecure; and a convoy

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became neceſſary to protect the linen ſhips from Dublin to Newry: a circumſtance that never before took place.* The ſucceſsful depredations alſo on the Britiſh Weſt India trade, were felt through Great Britain in an alarming degree; and ſhocked their commerce ſo far, as to occaſion ſudden and frequent bankruptcies in London, Briſtol, and almoſt all the great marts of the nation.

Thus the colonies were filled with every thing neceſſary for carrying on a war, or that furniſhed them the luxuries of life. But the ſudden acquiſition of wealth, which in conſequence of unexpected ſucceſs, flowed into the lap of individuals, ſo much beyond their former fortune or ideas, was not indeed very favorable to the virtue or manners of the poſſeſſors. It had a tendency to contract the mind, and led it to ſhrink into ſelfiſh views and indulgencies, totally inconſiſtent with genuine republicaniſm. The coffers of the rich were not unlocked for the public benefit, but their contents were liberally ſquandered in purſuit of frivolous enjoyments, to which moſt of them had heretofore been ſtrangers.

This avaricious ſpirit, indeed, ſomewhat retarded the meaſures contemplated by congreſs, who had determined, that the army in future

* Britiſh Annual Regiſter, 1777.

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ſhould ſtand on a more ſtable footing. They had directed that eighty-eight battalions ſhould be raiſed, and kept in full pay until the cloſe of the war; and as an encouragement to enliſt, they promiſed a certain allotment of lands to both officers and ſoldiers, at the commencement of peace; yet the recruiting ſervice went on heavily for a time, and at an immenſe expenſe to the United States. But among a people whoſe perſonal liberty had been their proudeſt boaſt, the above was not the ſole cauſe of the difficulty of raiſing a permanent army: the novelty of being enchained to a ſtanding army was diſguſting; they generally revolted at the idea of enliſting for an indefinite term: thus the army ſtill remained incomplete, and the militia were again called out as before. In that mode there was no want of zeal and alacrity; great numbers always appeared ready for any temporary ſervice.

During the winter of this year, the Britiſh commander did not attempt any thing of greater magnitude, than the deſtruction of the American magazines. He effected his purpoſe at Peekſkill, at Courtland Manor; and about the middle of April, he ſent on a detachment under the command of governor Tryon, to the little town of Danbury, on the borders of Connecticut, where a conſiderable quantity of proviſions and other articles had been depoſited, for the uſe of the American army. He conſid-

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ered it of great importance to cut off theſe reſources, before the opening of the ſpring campaign.

In conjunction with ſir William Erſkine and brigadier general Agnew, governor Tryon, who had embodied near two thouſand royaliſts, was veſted with the principal command, on the trivial expedition to Danbury. He executed his orders with alacrity. They deſtroyed a few hogſheads of rum and ſugar, a conſiderable quantity of grain and other proviſions, about ſeventeen hundred tents, and plundered and burnt a number of houſes in the town of Danbury. But their retreat to their ſhipping was intercepted by the militia of the country, drawn out by the generals Wooſter and Silliman. A ſmall detachment of continental troops commanded by general Arnold, with a party of recruiting officers joined them, and a rencounter enſued, when much bravery was exhibited on both ſides. General Wooſter, an aged and experienced officer, and a very worthy man, was mortally wounded. General Arnold had his horſe ſhot under him at the moment a ſoldier had his bayonet lifted for his deſtruction; but with ſurprizing agility, he diſengaged himſelf from his horſe, and drew a piſtol that laid his enemy dead at his feet. On the third day after his landing, governor Tryon again reached the ſhipping, and re-embarked his troops with inconſiderable loſs, though exceedingly fatigued

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by a march of thirty miles, haraſſed the whole time by an enemy arranged on each hand, and preſſed in the rear by recruits hourly coming in to the aſſiſtance of his opponents.* CHAP. X. 1777.

Within a few days, repriſals were made for this ſucceſsful feat of Tryon, by the more brilliant enterpriſe of colonel Meiggs; who, with only one hundred and ſeventy men, landed on the ſouthern part of Long Iſland, ſurpriſed the enemy lying at Sag Harbour, burnt twelve armed veſſels, captured the ſailors, deſtroyed the forage and ſtores on the eaſt part of the iſland, and returned to Guilford, about ninety miles diſtance, within thirty hours from the time of his departure from thence. He brought with him the trophies of his ſucceſs, without the loſs of a man. As no action of importance was exhibited for ſeveral months, theſe ſmaller depredations and inconſiderable ſkirmiſhes, ſerved only to keep the ſpirits in play, and preſerve the mind from that lethargic ſtate, which inaction or want of object creates.

The plan digeſted for the ſummer campaign, among the Britiſh officers, was, to gain poſſeſ-

* It has been acknowledged by ſome Britiſh hiſtorians, that their loſs more than counterbalanced the advantages gained in this expedition to Danbury.

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ſion of Philadelphia, to command the central colonies, and to drive the Americans from all their poſts in the province of Canada. Some circumſtances had taken place that ſeemed to favor theſe deſigns. Confident of his ſucceſs from his ſuperior numbers in the field, general Howe for a time, exerciſed all the artifices of an experienced commander, to bring general Waſhington to a deciſive engagement: but, from a perfect command of his temper, and a judicious arrangement of the few continental troops, and the militia he had in aid, the American chieftain defeated every meaſure practiſed to bring him to a general action. He placed about two thouſand men in Princeton, and with the main body of his army, took his ſtand on the high and advantageous grounds in the neighbourhood, and made all poſſible preparation for defence. This determined line of conduct in general Waſhington, gave a new turn to Britiſh operations. On the nineteenth of June, general Howe decamped from Brunſwick, and removed to Amboy, with every appearance of a ſpeedy embarkation. His troops as uſual committed every outrage on their way, and as if inſtigated by deſpair of becoming maſters of the country, and envious of the progreſs of arts and ſciences in America, the colleges and public libraries were burnt, all public buildings and places of worſhip ſwept away, and nothing that had the appearance of diſtinguiſhed elegance eſcaped. But the mind and the

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pen weary of the detail of deſtruction, it is enough to obſerve, that the Britiſh army in their retreat, left every trait of deſolation and barbariſm behind them.

The manœuvres of the Britiſh commander led to the belief, and every thing wore the ſtrongeſt appearance, that he was about to take a final leave of the Jerſies. The illuſion ſucceeded ſo far, as to induce general Waſhington to ſend a body of three thouſand men, commanded by the generals Maxwell, Conway, and lord Stirling, with deſign to attack the rear of their march. General Howe appriſed of this movement, haſtily returned to the charge. He diſpatched lord Cornwallis on a circuitous route, who ſoon came up with lord Stirling, ſtrongly poſted in a wood.

The Americans determined to diſpute the ground with Cornwallis; but the ardor of the Britiſh troops, and the rivalry of the Heſſians, obliged them ſoon to quit their advantageous poſt, and retreat with precipitation. The loſs the Americans ſuſtained was not inconſiderable; they ſuffered greatly, both from the extreme heat of the ſeaſon, and the valor of their antagoniſts. From this and ſome other circumſtances, it was for a time generally believed, that the late movement of general Howe and his army, was but a feint to draw general Waſhington to an action, rather than from a fixed

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deſign immediately to evacuate the ſtate of New Jerſey. Convinced of this, Waſhington drew in his lines, and recovered his camp on the hills, determined to perſevere in his defenſive ſyſtem, until ſome more advantageous opportunity ſhould juſtify the hazard of a general engagement.

It would undoubtedly have been highly imprudent for general Howe at this time, to have perſiſted in puſhing his way to the Delaware, through a country diſguſted and alienated by the barbarity of his troops. Moſt of the inhabitants of this ſtate were now armed for defence. Inflamed by reſentment from the ſufferings of the laſt year, impelled by neceſſity from the impediments in the way of all private occupations, and fired by a love of glory, they were now ardent for action, in proportion as they had been heretofore remiſs; and came to the field prepared to conquer or die in defence of their country. At the ſame time, general Waſhington was daily gaining ſtrength by the arrival of freſh troops, from various other quarters.

The Britiſh commander accordingly thought proper about mid-ſummer, to decamp in earneſt. He drew off his whole force as privately as poſſible to New York; thence embarked, and ſailed from Sandy Hook the twenty-third of July. The deſtination of the fleet and army

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was kept so profoundly secret, that for some time after their embarkation, every capital on the continent was apprehensive that they should be the object of the next visit from a potent armament, that seemed at a loss where to direct their operations. This expectation occasioned a general anxiety until the latter part of August, when the fleet appeared in the Chesapeak, and the army soon after landed at the head of the river Elk. On his arrival there, general Howe immediately published a proclamation, in which he assured the inhabitants every where of safety and protection, provided they were not found in arms, and promised pardon to all officers and soldiers who should surrender to the royal army.

Indeed his disposition to clemency appeared so conspicous on his first arrival, that it prevented the entire depopulation of the adjacent parts of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and the lower counties of Delaware; the inhabitants of which, on the first appearance of so formidable a foe in their neighbourhood, were struck with consternation, and on the point of abandoning their habitations.

It was now obvious, that the possession of the city of Philadelphia was the stake for which both armies played. General Washington had moved with the greatest part of his troops for the defence of that elegant city, and had by de-

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tached parties, embarraſſed the march of the Britiſh army from the river Elk to the Brandywine. In the neighbourhood of the laſt the two armies met, and on the eleventh of September came to a general engagement. The battle was fought with bravery, and ſuſtained with ſpirit on both ſides; but the fortune of the day declared againſt the Americans, yet not ſo decidedly as the ſanguine expectations of their antagoniſts had led them to hope from ſuch an event. But it gave them an aſtoniſhing advantage in the minds of the people through all the diſtrict of Pennſylvania; and enabled general Howe with more facility to complete his enterpriſe. Many officers of high rank on both ſides, ſuffered much in the ſpirited action at the Brandywine. A few days after this affair, general Wayne, who had concealed himſelf in a wood, with fifteen hundred men, in order to haraſs the rear of the Britiſh, was diſcovered and attacked by brigadier general Grey, who had given orders that no alarm ſhould be made by the uſe of fire-arms. He made the onſet about one o'clock in the morning; and by the more cruel exerciſe of the bayonet, ſeveral hundred Americans were killed and wounded: the remainder with difficulty eſcaped by flight.

Among others who ſuffered in the battle of Brandywine, the marquis de la Fayette, a young nobleman of France, was dangerouſly wound-

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ed. Warmed by an enthuſiaſtic love of liberty, and animated by a laudable ambition, this amiable young gentleman had left the court of France without leave of the king: and quitting the pleaſures of domeſtic felicity, he embarked at his own expenſe, and engaged in the ſervice of the United States at an early period of the war, when the affairs of America wore the darkeſt aſpect. His zeal and his heroiſm to the concluſion of the conteſt, placed the well-earned laurel on his brow, and procured him the love, reſpect, and beſt wiſhes of the people throughout America. Indeed all the French officers in the continental army, among whom were many of high conſideration, acquitted themſelves with diſtinguiſhed gallantry on this and many other occaſions, where the courage of the ſoldier, and the humanity of the officer, were called into exerciſe.

General Waſhington obliged to retreat in diſorder, and cloſely purſued after the action, retired to Cheſter. He ſoon after with his army reached Philadelphia; but the Britiſh commanders directed their operations with ſo much judgment and ſucceſs, that before the twenty-ſixth of September, Waſhington thought proper to evacuate the city. Lord Cornwallis with the Britiſh grenadiers, and two battalions of Heſſians, on that day made a triumphal entry, and took poſſeſſion of the capital of the United States.

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The era was truly critical. Congreſs again found it neceſſary, a ſecond time to deſert the city, and now repaired to York-Town for ſafety. Diſſenſions ran high among the inhabitants of Philadelphia. Some of the moſt opulent families were diſaffected, and renounced all adherence to the union: and ſeveral perſons of different deſcriptions, emboldened by the abſence of congreſs, and the ſucceſs of the Britiſh arms, took this opportunity to declare in favor of the royal cauſe. One of principal conſideration among them, went out, and conducted the king's troops into the city. Others declared themſelves zealouſly attached to the meaſures of adminiſtration, and equally diſguſted with the oppoſition of the colonies. Among theſe was Joſeph Galloway, a member of congreſs, and ſpeaker of the houſe of repreſentatives in Pennſylvania. He ſoon after repaired to England; where he indefatigably exerted his abilities and his influence againſt his native country, on all occaſions.

Beſides thoſe individual apoſtates, the quaker intereſt had long embarraſſed every public meaſure in that colony. They were a large and powerful body in the ſtate of Pennſylvania; and, notwithſtanding their pacific principles, though not actually in arms, they at this time took a decided part againſt the American cauſe. Their previous conduct had drawn upon themſelves many ſeverities. Several of the

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principal leaders had been impriſoned, and others ſent out of the city of Philadelphia, on the approach of the Britiſh army. Yet ſtill they refuſed the ſmalleſt ſubmiſſion to the preſent government, and appealed to the laws, by which they claimed perſonal ſafety. But whether from a conſideration of the neceſſity of a temporary ſuſpenſion of law, in times of public and imminent danger, or whether from the ſanguine reſolutions which operate on all parties, when their favorite ſyſtem totters on the brink of ruin, little regard was paid even to the legal claims of this body of citizens. Several perſons of the firſt diſtinction and character among them, notwithſtanding their juſt and ſenſible remonſtrances, were ſent off to Virginia, to prevent the influence they might have through a ſtate, then the principal ſeat of war.

From theſe political diſſenſions, the partial defeats, the loſs of Philadelphia, the ſlowneſs of recruits for permanent ſervice, the difficulty of obtaining ſupplies for the army from various cauſes, and particularly from the monopolizing and avaricious ſpirit that was faſt gaining ground in America, and from *delay*, "the be-"trayer of all confederations," a lowering aſpect was caſt over the operations of America on every ſide. On the contrary, the Britiſh government, the army, and their adherents,

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had much reaſon to flatter themſelves with an idea of the ſpeedy completion of their deſigns againſt the United States. They were now in poſſeſſion of the firſt city in the union; general Clinton was in force at New York; general Vaughan on the North River, with troops ſufficient to ſweep away the inhabitants on both ſides, and to keep the adjacent country in awe. A large detachment of the Britiſh army ſtill held the poſſeſſion of Newport: colonel Loſbourg with a Heſſian brigade in conjunction with them, was piratically plundering the neighbouring coaſts, and burning the ſcattered villages of the ſtate of Rhode Iſland.

It is proper here to obſerve, that ſoon after the Britiſh troops had taken poſſeſſion of Rhode Iſland, ſome animoſities had ariſen between general Howe and lord Percy, who commanded there. This was occaſioned by a requiſition from ſir William Howe to his lordſhip, to ſend him on fifteen hundred men for the better defence of New York, and to aid his operations in that quarter.

Lord Percy declined a compliance with this order, alleging as a reaſon for this refuſal, that the Americans were rapidly collecting and ſtrengthening themſelves in the town of Providence; that the number of troops already there, gave them reaſon to be apprehenſive for the ſafety of Newport. General Howe reſent-

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ed the refuſal; threatened earl Percy with a trial for diſobedience of orders, and reprimanded him in language which the earl thought derogatory to an officer of his rank, character, and conſequence. On this uſage, which lord Percy conſidered very affrontive, he immediately wrote to his father the duke of Northumberland, requeſting him, without delay, to obtain his recal from the American ſervice. Soon after this he embarked for England, having reſigned his command to general Preſcott.

His advance to the chief command of the troops on Rhode Iſland, was not long enjoyed by general Preſcott, before a circumſtance took place which was ſufficiently mortifying to himſelf and the Britiſh. In the beginning of July, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-ſeven, colonel Barton, a provincial officer, and ſeveral others, accompanied by only thirty-eight men, embarked in ſeveral boats from Warwick Neck, eluding the vigilance of the Britiſh ſhips and guard-boats, he and his party paſſed them in the dark, and landed on Rhode Iſland about twelve o'clock at night.

Colonel Barton had received ſome intelligence, of the inſecure ſituation in which the Britiſh commander frequently lodged on the iſland. On this information, he formed the bold deſign of ſurpriſing and ſeizing him: this he effected with a facility beyond his own moſt

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ſanguine expectations. Having firſt ſecured the centinel at the door, he ſurpriſed general Preſcott in his bed. One of his *aids* leaped from a window in hopes of eſcape, but was prevented. Their deſign accompliſhed, the little party haſtened to their boats with all poſſible expedition. Signals were made for an alarm on ſhore; but it was too late: Barton and his party were out of danger. When they reached the ſpot from whence they had ſet out on this adventure, a chariot was prepared for the reception of general Preſcott, in which he was eſcorted ſafely from Warwick to Providence.

Colonel Barton received great applauſe from his countrymen, for his ſpirited and well-executed enterpriſe. It was not indeed an object of much magnitude; but the previous circumſtances of general Preſcott's conduct had been ſuch, as to render his capture a ſubject of much exultation to the Americans. He had, while in command at Newport, inſulted and abuſed the inhabitants, ridiculed the American officers, and ſet a price upon ſome of their heads, particularly on that of general Arnold, which Arnold retaliated with the advertiſement of a ſmall price for the head of general Preſcott.

The ſimilarity of circumſtances that attended the capture of the generals Preſcott and Lee, and their rank in the armies to which they reſpectively belonged, rendered it highly proper

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that an exchange ſhould have taken place immediately. It was however for a time delayed; but finally, general Lee obtained his liberty in conſequence of this buſineſs.

The diſcouraging circumſtances above related with regard to the arrangements, military poſts, and operations of the Britiſh, from Newport to New York, and from New York to Philadelphia, gave very promiſing proſpects of ſucceſs to the Britiſh in that part of America. At the ſame time general Burgoyne, with the flower of the Britiſh army, the Canadian provincials, and hordes of ſavages that poured down from beyond the lakes, was making advances, and in the language of bombaſt and ſelf-confidence, threatened deſtruction and vengeance to any who ſhould have hardihood enough, to endeavour to ſtop his progreſs, or to oppoſe the authority under which he acted.

But notwithſtanding the general wayward appearance of the affairs of the United States, the legiſlatures as we ſhall ſee, loſt not their magnanimity, the people their ardor, nor the army their valor. Not diſheartened by the circumſtances of the late action at the Brandywine, or the loſs of Philadelphia, general Waſhington with his brave troops, in numbers comparatively inconſiderable, kept the Britiſh army in play, until the ſetting in of winter. Within a few days after the ſurrender of Philadelphia,

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the Americans attacked the royal camp at Germantown, ſituated about ſix miles from the city, where the main body of the Britiſh army had taken their ſtand.

This was a very unexpected manœuvre. The attempt was bold, and the defence brave. The Americans for a time, ſeemed to have greatly the advantage; but the enterpriſe finally failed. They were obliged to retreat in great confuſion, after the heavy loſs of many officers and men. The diſappointment of the Americans, was in conſequence of the addreſs and ability of colonel Muſgrove, who judiciouſly ſtood on the defenſive, and checked the progreſs of the continental troops, until general Grey and brigadier general Agnew, with a large detachment, came to his relief. A warm, but ſhort action enſued: when the Americans were totally routed, and driven out of the field of action.

General Lee, who had not the higheſt opinion of general Waſhington's military abilities, obſerved on this occaſion, "that by a ſingle "ſtroke of the *bathos*, the partial victory at Ger-"mantown was corrupted into a defeat."* This was however, too ſevere a cenſure. A number of circumſtances co-operated to blaſt the hopes of the Americans, after the early

* General Lee's letters.

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promiſe of ſucceſs. The Britons themſelves have given teſtimony to the bravery and good conduct of Waſhington and his army on this occaſion. One of their writers has atteſted, "in this action the Americans acted upon the "offenſive; and though repulſed with loſs, "ſhewed themſelves a formidable adverſary, "capable of charging with reſolution, and re-"treating with order. The hope therefore en-"tertained from the effect of any fair action "with them, as deciſive, and likely to put a "ſpeedy termination to the war, was exceed-"ingly abated."

The higheſt expectation had been formed on the reduction of Philadelphia, both by the foreign and internal foes of America. Though both armies were fired with equal ardor, and on all occaſions were equally ready for action, yet the repeated ſkirmiſhes for ſeveral weeks in the neighbourhood of the city, were not productive of any very important conſequences, except the loſs of many brave men, and ſeveral officers of great merit. None of theſe were more diſtinguiſhed and lamented, than general Naſh on the American ſide, and brigadier general Agnew and colonel Bird of the Britiſh line, who loſt their lives in the battle of Germantown.

It was very important to the Britiſh commander after the above tranſactions, to open a

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free paſſage to Philadelphia by the Delaware, in order to obtain ſupplies of proviſions by water for their army. This was impeded by the American ſhipping, and by ſeveral ſtrong poſts held by the Americans on the river; the principal of which was Red Bank. Here they had an opportunity of retrieving the recent diſgrace of their arms at Germantown. The Heſſians under the command of colonel Donop, had the principal hand in this buſineſs. He croſſed the Delaware with fifteen hundred men, at Cooper's ferry oppoſite Philadelphia, and marched to attack the redoubts at Red Bank.

A cannonade was opened: the camp was attacked with ſpirit, and defended with equal gallantry by colonel Greene of Rhode Iſland; who replied to the ſummons of count Donop to ſurrender, "that he ſhould defend the place "to the laſt extremity." On this, the Heſſians attempted to ſtorm the redoubts; but the aſſailants were obliged to retreat in their turn. One Heſſian brigade was nearly cut to pieces in the action, and count Donop mortally wounded and taken priſoner, as were ſeveral other officers of conſideration. The remainder retreated with great precipitation through the night, leaving one half of their party dead, wounded, or priſoners to the Americans; croſſed the river the next morning; and in this mortified ſituation, the remnant who eſcaped entered Philadelphia. This important paſs was

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a key to the other posts on the river; and for its brave defence the officers and soldiers were justly applauded, and colonel Greene complimented by congress, with a present of an elegant sword.

After the action at Red Bank, the vigilance and caution of general Washington could not be overcome by the valor and advantages of his foes, so far as to induce him to hazard any action of consequence.* The design of opening the Delaware, was now the principal object with the British commander. This was effected without much difficulty, after the reduction of Mud Island. From this strong post, the Americans were obliged to retreat, after a very manly resistance. They did not evacuate their works until reduced to despair, by some British ships advantageously playing upon them. From the very superior advantages of their enemies in many respects, they were induced to set fire to every thing within reach; and after

* For this general Washington was very severely censured by some; and even the legislature of the state of Pennsylvania remonstrated to congress, and expressed their uneasiness, that the American commander should leave the capital in possession of the enemy, and retire to winter-quarters. But his little army destitute of every necessary, without the possibility of a supply at that season, was a sufficient apology.

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great ſlaughter they abandoned a place, which had already coſt them too much in its defence.*

In the ſtruggle to open the Delaware, the Auguſta and the Merlin on the part of Britain, were loſt; but the loſſes of the Americans were far beyond thoſe of the Britiſh. The Delaware frigate and ſome others were captured, and ſeveral ſhips burnt by themſelves, to prevent their falling into the hands of their enemies.

Nothing more decided than the above tranſactions took place this ſeaſon. The Delaware river thus cleared, and eligible winter-quarters ſecured for the king's troops, and the cold ſeaſon faſt advancing, general Howe gave up the purſuit of the cautious and wary Waſhington. He found it impoſſible with all his efforts to bring him to another general action, while his own judgment, and that of the moſt judicious of his officers, forbade it, and common prudence dictated the probable diſadvantages of ſuch a movement. His numbers were too ſmall, and

* The writer of this work does not aim at a particular deſcription or detail of all the engagements, battles, and rencounters, between the two contending armies. A general ſketch of the moſt material military movements, completes her deſign; the primary object of which, is not a dry narrative of military havoc.

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the wants of the army too many, to hazard any thing. The moſt guarded and prudent defence was the only line of conduct left to the American commander.

Theſe circumſtances induced general Howe, about the middle of December, to draw the main body of his army into the city of Philadelphia. They were indeed unable longer to keep the field, being very deſtitute of tents and other epuipage neceſſary for the army in a cold climate, at this inclement ſeaſon.

Thus after the proud vaunts of victory and conqueſt, and the loſs of many gallant officers and brave men, the Britiſh commander had little to boaſt at the concluſion of the campaign, but the poſſeſſion of a city abandoned by the beſt of its inhabitants, and the command of the adjacent country, circumſcribed within the narrow limits of twenty miles. This was but a ſmall compenſation for the waſte of life and treaſure. It was a gloomy picture of the termination of a campaign, for ſir William Howe to convey to his maſter and to his countrymen, after the exultation for ſome partial ſucceſſes had flattered them with the higheſt hopes of ſpeedy and complete victory. Yet, notwithſtanding theſe vauntings over a people, among whom there did not yet appear a probability of complete ſubjugation by the ſword, nor the ſmalleſt traces of a diſpoſition among the peo-

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ple of America, to yield obedience to the laws and requiſitions, which the government of Great Britain were attempting thus to enforce at the point of the bayonet.

After ſir William Howe had retired and taken winter-quarters in the city, a novel ſcene, conſidering the weakneſs of the continental army, was exhibited without. To the ſurpriſe and wonder of their foes, and to the admiration of all mankind acquainted with the circumſtances, the Americans, nearly deſtitute of tents, poorly ſupplied with proviſions, almoſt without ſhoes, ſtockings, blankets, or other clothing, cheerfully erected themſelves huts of timber and bruſh, and encamped for the winter, at a place called Valley-Forge, within twenty-five miles of the city of Philadelphia. Thus in the neighbourhood of a powerful Britiſh army, fearleſs of its numbers and ſtrength, a ſtriking proof of their intrepidity in ſuffering, and their defiance of danger, was exhibited by a kind of challenge bidden to their enemies, not very uſual in ſimilar ſituations. The commander in chief, and ſeveral of the principal officers of the American army, in defiance of danger, either to themſelves or to ſuch tender connexions, ſent for their ladies from the different ſtates to which they belonged, to paſs the remainder of the winter, and by their preſence to enliven the gloomy appearance of a hutted

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village in the woods, inhabited only by an hungry and half-naked ſoldiery.* CHAP. X. 1777.

The reſolution and patience of this little army ſurmounted every difficulty. They waited long, amidſt penury, hunger, and cold, for the neceſſary ſupplies, which in ſpite of the utmoſt exertions of the ſeveral ſtates, came in but too ſlowly. Such was the deficiency of horſes and waggons, for the ordinary as well as extraordinary occaſions of the army, that the men in many inſtances, cheerfully yoked themſelves to little carriages of their own conſtruction: others loaded the wood and proviſions on their backs for preſent ſupply, in their extreme neceſſity. General Waſhington informed a committee ſent from congreſs to inquire into the ſtate of the army, that ſome brigades had been ſome days without meat, and that the common ſoldiers had frequently been at his quarters, to make known their diſtreſſes. Unprovided with materials to raiſe their cold lodgment from the ground, the dampneſs of the ſituation, and the wet earth on which they lay, occaſioned ſickneſs and mortality to rage among them to an aſtoniſhing degree:—"Indeed, "nothing could ſurpaſs their ſuffering, except

* Nothing but the inexperience of the American ladies, and their confidence in the judgment of their huſbands, could juſtify this hazard to their perſons, and to their feelings of delicacy.

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"the patience and fortitude with which it was "endured by the faithful part of the army. "Thoſe of a different character deſerted in "great numbers."*

In this weak and dangerous ſituation, the American army continued encamped at Valley-Forge, from December till May; while the Britiſh troops in high health and ſpirits, lay in Philadelphia, without once attempting to moleſt them. For this want of vigor and enterpriſe, general Howe was ſeverely and juſtly cenſured in Britain, blamed by thoſe intereſted in his ſucceſs in America, and ridiculed by the impartial obſerver in every quarter. By his negligence this winter, he again undoubtedly loſt the faireſt opportunity of executing the deſigns of his *maſter*, and acquiring to himſelf much military fame. But by waſting his time in effeminate and reprehenſible pleaſures, he ſunk his character as an officer; and few ſcrupled to aſſert, that the man of honor and valor was loſt for a time, in the arms of a handſome adultereſs. Many of his officers followed his example, and abandoned themſelves to idleneſs and debauchery; while the ſoldiers were left to indulge their own licentious habits.

At this period, though not attacked by a foreign foe, the ſituation of the American commander in chief was really not very enviable.

* See a letter from the committee ſent from congreſs, to Mr. Laurens the preſident.

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It required the utmoſt prudence and addreſs, to keep together the appearance of an army, under the complicated miſeries they muſt feel, in the depth of winter, hungry and barefooted, whoſe fatiguing, circuitous marches over the ſnowy path, had been marked by their bleeding feet, before they, in ſuch a deſtitute predicament, pitched their tents in the valley. The dilatory ſpirit of ſome, and the peculating diſpoſitions of other officers in the various public departments, increaſed every difficulty with regard to clothing and ſubſiſtence. The deplorable ſtate of the ſick, the corrupt conduct in ſome of the hoſpitals, the want of diſcipline among the ſoldiers, the inexperience of officers, the ſlowneſs of recruits, and the diminution of the old army from various cauſes, were circumſtances diſcouraging indeed; and might have been conſidered, if not a balance, at leaſt a weight in the ſcale, againſt the advantages and the pride of high ſtation. Yet theſe were not all the embarraſſments which the commander in chief had to encounter;—general Waſhington had his perſonal enemies to combat: nor was he without his rivals for power and fame.*

* Both the conduct and letters of general Lee, had in ſeveral inſtances confirmed the opinion, that he was ambitious of obtaining the chief command of the army of the United States; and doubtleſs he had a party that for a ſhort time flattered theſe expectations. At this time indeed he was a priſoner, but his correſpondencies were extenſive.

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In all communities there are ſome reſtleſs minds, who create jealouſies and foment diviſions, that often injure the beſt cauſe, and the moſt unimpeachable character: and it may be obſerved, that there is ever a ſpirit of intrigue and circumvention, that runs parallel with the paſſions of men. Thus the fortune of war is frequently changed by dangerous emulations, and the beſt ſyſtems of ſocial and political happineſs overthrown, by the envy and reſentment of little minds, or the boundleſs ambition of more exalted ſouls. Nor was it many years, before America diſcovered ſhe had in her boſom, her Cæſars and her Catilines, as well as her Brutuses and her Catos.

Many perſons were diſguſted with the dictatorial powers veſted in general Waſhington, after the action at Trenton, which they alleged were at his own requeſt. Theſe were ample indeed. He was empowered by congreſs "to reform and new model the military ar-"rangements, in ſuch manner as he judged "beſt for the public ſervice." He was alſo veſted with ſeveral other diſcretionary powers.* Congreſs had indeed limited his power to ſix months; but exigencies of the higheſt neceſſity, had urged him ſometimes to exerciſe it in a manner too arbitrary for the principles and diſpoſitions of Americans, unuſed to the

* See reſolves of congreſs.

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impreſſment of their property for the uſe of armies. CHAP. X. 1777.

In this ſtate of affairs, the commander was attacked by anonymous letters, fictitious ſignatures, and incendiary ſuggeſtions: he was cenſured for his cool operations, defenſive movements, and *Fabian* ſlowneſs. Diſadvantageous impreſſions were made on the minds of ſome, and others were led to believe, that general Waſhington was not without his weakneſſes and his foibles. It was obſerved by one of his principal officers:*—"That deciſion is "often wanting in minds otherways valua- "ble:—That an indeciſive mind in a com- "mander, is one of the greateſt misfortunes "that could befal an army:—That he had often "lamented this circumſtance through the cam- "paign:—That they were in a very awful ſitu- "ation, in an alarming ſtate, that required the "utmoſt wiſdom and firmneſs of mind."

A wiſh at this time undoubtedly prevailed, among ſome diſtinguiſhed characters,† for a ſu-

* See a letter from general Reed to general Lee, afterwards publiſhed.

† Samuel Adams of Boſton, general Mifflin, and ſeveral other characters of diſtinction, were ſuſpected of unfriendly deſigns towards the commander in chief. But

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percedence of his command: but Washington, cool, cautious, and more popular than any man, his good genius was ever at hand to preserve his character invulnerable: yet, several circumstances confirmed the opinion, that even some members of congress at this period, were intriguing for his removal. It might indeed at this time, have had a fatal effect on American affairs, had general Washington fallen beneath

there never were sufficient grounds to suppose, that Mr. Adams ever harbored any disaffection to the person of general Washington: on the contrary, he respected and esteemed his character, and loved the man. But zealous and ardent in the defence of his injured country, he was startled at every thing that appeared to retard the operations of war, or impede the success of the revolution; a revolution for which posterity is as much indebted to the talents and exertions of Mr. Adams, as to those of any one in the United States.

General Mifflin was a young gentleman of a warm and sanguine disposition. Active and zealous, he engaged early in opposition to the measures of the British parliament. He took arms, and was among the first officers commissioned, on the organization of a continental army. For this he was read out of the society of quakers, to which himself and his family had belonged. But Mr. Mifflin's principles led him to consider himself under a moral obligation, to act offensively as well as defensively, and vigorously to oppose the enemies of his country; and from his character and principles, he undoubtedly wished to see a commander in chief of the united armies, who would admit of no delay in the acceleration of the object in which they were engaged.

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a popular diſguſt, or the intrigues of his enemies.

Perhaps few other men could have kept together the ſhadow of an army, under ſuch a combination of difficulties as the young republic had to encounter, both in the field and the cabinet. Many men of a more active and enterpriſing ſpirit, might have put a period to the war in a ſhorter ſpace of time; yet perhaps not ultimately ſo much in favor of America, as the ſlow, defenſive movements of the officer then veſted with the chief command.

This line of conduct was thought by ſome, to be not ſo much owing to his ſuperior ſagacity and penetration, as to a conſtitutional want of ardency, at times when energy appeared moſt neceſſary to many perſons. A predilection in favor of a connexion with Britain, ſeemed united with this diſpoſition. It had appeared clearly by many circumſtances in converſation with his confidential friends, that he was not in the beginning of oppoſition, fond of a final ſeparation from the parent ſtate; and that he wiſhed to move defenſively, until ſome events might take place, that would bring back, and with honor and dignity re-unite, the revolted colonies to the boſom of their ancient parent.*

* In the early period of the war, many very worthy characters oppoſed to the Britiſh ſyſtem, beſides general

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But the public opinion always in his favor, with a happy talent to ſecure the confidence of the people, he commanded in a remarkable manner, their affections, their reſources, and their attachment, to the end of the war; and had the good fortune to parry every charge brought againſt him, with the firmneſs of the ſoldier, though not without the ſenſibility of the man who found his reputation at ſtake. He complained heavily to his private friends, yet took no public notice of the vague imputations of ſlander, that fell from the pen of a French officer of diſtinction, under the ſignature of De Liſle.

Theſe letters were fraught with the moſt ſevere ſtrictures on the general's military character and abilities. Some other letters in the ſame ſtyle and manner, without a name, were directed to gentlemen of character and conſideration in ſeveral of the ſtates. Some addreſſed to Patrick Henry, the governor of the ſtate of Virginia, he immediately tranſmitted to congreſs, and to the general himſelf. However boldly ſome of the charges were urged, they

Waſhington, wiſhed for a reconciliation with Great Britain, if it could be procured conſiſtently with honor, and with ſufficient pledges of ſecurity to the juſt claims of the colonies, rather than an irrevocable ſeparation. But time convinced all, that nothing but independence, and a total diſmemberment, could ſecure the liberties of the United States.

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made little impreſſion on the public mind: the tranſient tale of the day paſſed as the pathleſs arrow, without leaving a trace behind. His enemies ſhrunk from the charge; and general Waſhington, by the current of applauſe that always ſet in his favor, became more than ever the idol of the army and the people.

General Conway, the reputed author of the letters ſigned De Liſle, was a gentleman of great military talents and experience, with an ambition equal to his abilities. He had left France with high expectations of rank in the ſervice of the United States. Not ſatisfied with the appointment of inſpector general of the American army, his pride wounded, and diſappointed that he did not ſuſtain a higher grade in office, which he had been led to flatter himſelf with before he left his country, and diſguſted by the ſuſpicions that fell upon him after the publication of De Liſle's letters, he reſigned his commiſſion, and returned to Europe.

Conway was not the only officer of his country, that ſuffered ſimilar mortifications. The credulity of men of talents, family, and merit, had been impoſed on by the indiſcretion of one* of the American agents, and their imaginations fired by ideas of *rank* and preferment in America, to which no foreigner was entitled.

* Silas Deane, the firſt agent ſent by congreſs to France.

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Thus, chagrined from the ſame cauſe, it was thought the valiant Coudray, an officer of diſtinguiſhed name and merit, who was a brigadier general and chief engineer in the French ſervice, leaped voluntarily to his watery grave. His death indeed, was attributed to the fleetneſs of his horſe, which it was ſaid he could not command. Having occaſion to croſs the Schuylkill, in company with ſome other officers, he entered a boat on horſeback. The career was ſwift; the cataſtrophe fatal: he leaped in on one ſide of the boat, and with equal celerity, out on the other. Thus both horſe and rider were irretrievably loſt. Coudray was beloved and lamented by all who knew him: and the loſs of Conway was regretted by many who eſteemed him for his literary abilities, and his military talents.

The important office of inſpector general relinquiſhed from neceſſity by general Conway, was immediately conferred on the baron de Steuben, an officer with the beſt credentials, who had recently arrived from Germany. The eſſential ſervices of this celebrated diſciplinarian, were in a very ſhort time felt throughout the army. New regulations took place, and new arrangements were made in the hoſpitals, in the commiſſary's, the quarter-maſter's, and other departments, which had been ſhamefully abuſed, not from a want of capacity or integrity in the preceding inſpectors, but from the igno-

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rance, inexperience, or peculation of many of the ſubordinate officers. From the date of the baron's advancement, a more thorough knowledge of *tactics* was acquired by the officers; more ſyſtem, diſcipline, and order appeared in the army; more equitable and permanent regulations, and a ſtricter adherence to the rules and laws of war, took place, than had been obſerved at any period before. The merits of this officer, univerſally acknowledged, were afterwards generouſly rewarded by the congreſs of the United States.

It may not however be improper to obſerve, before we paſs on to the ſubſequent circumſtances of the war, that though the baron de Steuben had been promoted to the rank of inſpector general, by the approbation of congreſs and the army, yet general Conway had a conſiderable party attached to him, among the military officers. Many perſons thought that his diſmiſſal from office, and permiſſion to return to France, under the degradation of character which fell upon him, without any ſpecified charges of delinquency in office, or any ſolid proofs that he really had been the author of the anonymous reproaches thrown on the character of general Waſhington, was at once affrontive both to himſelf and his nation. Theſe ideas are more clearly exhibited in a

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ſketch of the life of Conway, by another hand.*

We ſhall only further obſerve, that the French nation was not diſpoſed to reſent individual ſlights, or even public neglects, at this intereſting period: a nation who viewed the reſiſtance of the American colonies to the overbearing power of Britain, on a broad ſcale. They conſidered their oppoſition, if ſucceſsful, as at once redounding to their own intereſt, and to the promotion of the liberties of mankind in general.

It had for many years been a primary object with the houſe of Bourbon, to humble the pride and power of Britain. No contingencies that had ariſen among the nations for near a century, appeared ſo likely to produce this effect, as an alienation from, and a total loſs of their colonies. This conſideration heightened the natural ardor, and quickened the conſtitutional energies of every Frenchman, to lend his hand to the work. Their characteriſtic impetuoſity always appeared conſpicuous in politics and war, as well as in the intrigues of love and gallantry. They were ever reſtleſs under any appearance of ſlowneſs that might retard the execution of their object: but the critical ſit-

* See Appendix, Note No. XX.

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nation of the American army at this period, rendered an attempt to leſſen the influence and the character of the commander in chief, dangerous and inexcuſable.

Notwithſtanding the freedom of opinion, and the licenſe of the preſs, which ſhould never be too much reſtrained in a free country, there are times and circumſtances which require ſilence; and however diſpoſed any one might be to cenſure the conduct of general Waſhington, either for the want of enterpriſe, alacrity, or military ſkill, yet perhaps no man in the United States, under the preſſure of ſo many difficulties, would have conducted with more diſcretion and judgment.

If there was any error in the diſmiſſal of general Conway, it might be in not obſerving a due degree of delicacy, or furniſhing any teſtimonials of his having acquitted himſelf well in his military capacity, a point on which all in that line are very tenacious. The diſplacing of a ſingle officer of any rank, is not ſufficiently important to dwell upon long; and the apology for having done it at all, muſt be the danger at this time, of diſguſting a foreign corps belonging to a court whoſe aſſiſtance was neceſſary, and whoſe aid had been courted, though their faith was not yet abſolutely pledged to promote the emancipation of the United States.

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France however, was looking with too eager and ſteady an eye, on the operations and ſucceſs of the reſiſtance of the colonies, to the meaſures and mandates of the crown and parliament of England, to be moved by any partial conſiderations, from the line of political conduct which they had adopted. This was to embrace the firſt favorable opportunity, when contingent circumſtances might promiſe ſucceſs, to ſupport the claim of independence, and render the breach complete and durable, between the United States and Great Britain; and thereby deprive that rival nation of the immenſe advantages they had already reaped, and might again recover by a revival and continuance of the connexion.

That part of the American army immediately under the command of general Waſhington, muſt now be left encamped at Valley-Forge for the winter. Their ſituation impels the mind to throw over them that veil of compaſſion, which a ſeaſon of perplexity, though not of abſolute deſpair, requires. We muſt now look over, and ſurvey with an anxious eye, and in the ſucceeding pages view the humiliating events, which for a time, attended the fortune of war in the northern department; and trace the footſteps of the ſoldier, through the forlorn deſert, which was ultimately the path to victory and glory.

END OF VOL. I.

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APPENDIX

TO VOLUME FIRST.

NOTE No. I. Page 9.

THE reader's curioſity may be gratified by the peruſal of a few particulars relative to the Plymouth ſettlers, from their earlieſt memorials. One hundred and one perſons left Holland, all of whom arrived at Plymouth in the month of December, one thouſand ſix hundred and twenty. From the ſufferings and hardſhips they ſuſtained, more than half their number died before the end of March, one thouſand ſix hundred and twenty-one.

On the borders of a forlorn wilderneſs, without any governmental reſtrictions, they thought it neceſſary to adopt ſome meaſures for order and ſubordination. They voluntarily on their arrival at Cape Cod, entered into covenant for this neceſſary purpoſe. It was a ſhort code, but replete with rules of equity and authority, ſufficient to maintain peace among themſelves, in their infant ſtate. Forty-one perſons affixed their names to the inſtrument; but at the end of four months, only twenty of them were living. Theſe were, John Carver their firſt governor, William Bradford the ſecond, and Edward Winſlow* the third, captain Miles Standiſh, who had been an experienced military

* Prince's Chronology, where may be found moſt of the particulars extant, relative to the firſt ſettlers at Plymouth.

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officer in the Netherlands, Richard Warren, eminently uſeful in the eſtabliſhment of the new colony,* (he lived only to the year one thouſand ſix hundred and twenty-eight,†) John Alden, Samuel Fuller, William Brewſter, Iſaac Allerton, Stephen Hopkins, Gilbert Winſlow, Peter Brown, Richard Gardner, John Howland, Francis Cook, John Billington, Francis Eaton, Edward Doty, George Soule, Edward Leiſter.

Several weeks elapſed after their arrival at Plymouth, before they ſaw any of the natives. About the middle of March, an Indian chief named Samoſet appeared, and abruptly exclaimed, "welcome Engliſh." This Indian had formerly been a priſoner to ſome Europeans, and had learnt a little of their language. By him they found that a peſtilence had raged among the bordering nations, that had ſwept them all off within the limits of Cape Cod and Braintree Bay, two or three years before. This was corroborated by the vaſt number of graves, and ſepulchral mounds and holes they had obſerved, in which the dead were interred, in all the grounds they had explored. Samoſet informed them, that Maſſaſoit was a neighbouring chief, who held juriſdiction over ſeveral other tribes. This induced the Engliſh to ſend him a friendly meſſage by Samoſet, which was faithfully delivered. The great ſachem ſoon came forward in an amicable manner, and entered into a treaty of peace with this handful of ſtrangers.

In the next autumn, an addition of thirty-five perſons from the Leyden congregation, arrived at Cape Cod. They ſoon found their aſſociates at Plymouth, patient, pious, and contented, though they could ſet nothing on their board but a lobſter, cold water, and a ſcanty pittance

* Prince's Chronology.

† The eſtates firſt purchaſed of the natives by Winſlow, Warren, and Bradford, remain in the hands of their poſterity to this day:—Warren at Plymouth, Bradford at Duxborough, and Winſlow at Marſhfield.

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of Indian bread, for the entertainment of their countrymen recently arrived, to ſhare with them the difficulties and dangers of planting ſettlements in the wilderneſs, at a vaſt diſtance from the civilized world, and ſurrounded by hordes of hoſtile nations of terrific form and barbarous manners.*

NOTE No. II. Page 28.

VIRGINIA RESOLVES.

On the twenty-ninth of May, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-five, the houſe of burgeſſes of Virginia came to the following reſolutions:—

WHEREAS the honorable houſe of commons in England, have of late drawn into queſtion, how far the general aſſembly of this colony hath power to enact laws for laying taxes and impoſing duties, payable by the people of this his majeſty's moſt ancient colony—For ſettling and aſcertaining the ſame to all future times, the houſe of burgeſſes of this preſent general aſſembly, have come to the ſeveral following reſolutions:—

Reſolved, That the firſt adventurers and ſettlers of this his majeſty's colony and dominion of Virginia, brought with them, and tranſmitted to their poſterity, and all others, his majeſty's ſubjects ſince inhabiting in this his majeſty's colony, all the privileges and immunities that have at any time been held, enjoyed, and poſſeſſed, by the people of Great Britain.

Reſolved, That by the two royal charters granted by king James the firſt, the coloniſts aforeſaid are declared entitled to all privileges of faithful, liege, and natural born ſubjects, to all intents and purpoſes, as if they had been abiding and born within the realm of England.

* New England Memorial.

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Reſolved, That his majeſty's liege people of this his moſt ancient colony, have enjoyed the right of being thus governed by their own aſſembly, in the article of taxes and internal police; and that the ſame have never been forfeited, or any other way yielded up, but have been conſtantly recognized by the king and people of Great Britain.

Reſolved therefore, That the general aſſembly of the colony, together with his majeſty or his ſubſtitute, have in their repreſentative capacity, the only excluſive right and power, to levy taxes and impoſitions upon the inhabitants of this colony; and that every attempt to veſt ſuch a power in any perſon or perſons whatſoever, other than the general aſſembly aforeſaid, is illegal, unconſtitutional, and unjuſt, and has a manifeſt tendency to deſtroy Britiſh, as well as American freedom.

The following reſolves were not paſſed, though drawn up by the committee. They are inſerted as a ſpecimen of the firſt and early energies of the *Old Dominion*, as Virginia is uſually called.

Reſolved, That his majeſty's liege people, the inhabitants of this colony, are not bound to yield obedience to any law or ordinance whatſoever, deſigned to impoſe any taxation whatſoever upon them, other than the laws and ordinances of the general aſſembly aforeſaid.

Reſolved, That any perſon who ſhall, by ſpeaking or writing, maintain that any perſon or perſons, other than the general aſſembly of this colony, have any right or power, to impoſe or lay any taxation whatſoever on the people here, ſhall be deemed an enemy to this his majeſty's colony.

NOTE No. III. Page 30.

On the twenty-firſt of October, the freeholders and other inhabitants of the town of Plymouth had a meet-

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ing, and unanimouſly agreed on inſtructions to Thomas Foſter, Eſq., their repreſentative in the general aſſembly of Maſſachuſetts Bay. In which, after expreſſing the higheſt eſteem for the Britiſh conſtitution, ſhewing how far the people of America have exerted themſelves in ſupport thereof, and detailing their grievances, they proceed as follows :—

"YOU, ſir, repreſent a people who are not only deſcend-
"ed from the firſt ſettlers of this country, but inhabit the
"very ſpot they firſt poſſeſſed. Here was firſt laid the
"foundation of the Britiſh empire in this part of America;
"which from a very ſmall beginning, has increaſed and
"ſpread in a manner very ſurpriſing, and almoſt incredi-
"ble; eſpecially when we conſider, that all this has been
"effected without the aid or aſſiſtance of any power on
"earth; that we have *defended*, *protected*, and *ſecured* our-
"ſelves, againſt the invaſions and cruelty of ſavages, and
"the ſubtlety and inhumanity of our inveterate and natu-
"ral enemies the French: and all this without the appro-
"priation of any tax by ſtamps, or ſtamp-acts laid upon
"our fellow-ſubjects in any part of the king's dominions,
"for defraying the expenſes thereof. This place, ſir, was
"at firſt the aſylum of liberty, and we hope will ever be
"preſerved ſacred to it; though it was then no more than
"a forlorn wilderneſs, inhabited only by ſavage men and
"beaſts. To this place our fathers, (whoſe memories be
"revered!) poſſeſſed of the principles of liberty in their
"purity, diſdaining ſlavery, fled, to enjoy thoſe privileges
"which they had an undoubted right to, but were depriv-
"ed of by the hands of violence and oppreſſion in their na-
"tive country. We, ſir, their poſterity, the freeholders and
"other inhabitants of this town, legally aſſembled for that
"purpoſe, poſſeſſed of the ſame ſentiments, and retaining
"the ſame ardor for liberty, think it our indiſpenſable duty
"on this occaſion, to expreſs to you theſe our ſentiments of
"the ſtamp-act, and its fatal conſequences to this country,
"and to enjoin upon you, as you regard not only the wel-

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"fare, but the very being of this people, that you, (conſiſt-
"ent with our allegiance to the king, and relation to the
"government of Great Britain,) diſregarding all propoſals
"for that purpoſe, exert all your power and influence in re-
"lation to the ſtamp-act, at leaſt until we hear the ſucceſs
"of our petitions for relief. We likewiſe, to avoid diſgra-
"cing the memories of our anceſtors, as well as the re-
"proaches of our own conſciences, and the curſes of poſter-
"ity, recommend it to you to obtain, if poſſible, in the hon-
"orable houſe of repreſentatives of this province, a full and
"explicit aſſertion of our rights, and to have the ſame en-
"tered on their public records—that all generations yet to
"come may be convinced, that we have not only a juſt
"ſenſe of our rights and liberties, but that we never (with
"ſubmiſſion to Divine Providence) will be ſlaves to any
"power on earth. And as we have at all times an abhor-
"rence of tumults and diſorders, we think ourſelves happy
"in being at preſent under no apprehenſions of any, and in
"having good and wholeſome laws, ſufficient to preſerve
"the peace of the province in all future times, unleſs pro-
"voked by ſome imprudent meaſure; ſo we think it by
"no means adviſeable, for you to intereſt yourſelf in the
"protection of ſtamp-papers or ſtamp-officers.

"The only thing we have further to recommend to you
"at this time is, to obſerve on all occaſions, a ſuitable fru-
"gality and economy in the public expenſes; and that you
"conſent to no unneceſſary or unuſual grant at this time
"of diſtreſs, when the people are groaning under the bur-
"then of heavy taxes; and that you uſe your endeavours
"to inquire into, and bear teſtimony againſt, any paſt,
"and to prevent any future, unconſtitutional draughts on
"the public treaſury."

NOTE No. IV. Page 32.

Names of the gentlemen delegated to meet at New York, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-five,

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on occaſion of the ſtamp-act: with the reſolves of this firſt American congreſs.

From the province of the Maſſachuſetts Bay.

James Otis,
Oliver Partridge,
Timothy Ruggles,
} Eſquires.

From the colony of Rhode Iſland and Providence Plantations.

Metcalf Bowler,
Henry Ward,
} Eſquires.

From the colony of Connecticut.

Eliphalet Dyer,
David Rowland,
William Samuel Johnſon,
} Eſquires.

From the colony of New York.

Robert R. Livingſton,
John Cruger,
Philip Livingſton,
William Bayard,
Leonard Liſpenard,
} Eſquires.

From the colony of New Jerſey.

Robert Ogden,
Hendrick Fiſher,
Joſeph Borden,
} Eſquires.

From the province of Pennſylvania.

John Dickenſon,
John Morton,
George Bryan,
} Eſquires.

From the government of the counties of Newcaſtle, Kent, and Suſſex, on Delaware.

Cæſar Rodney,
Thomas M'Kean,
} Eſquires.

From the province of Maryland.

William Murdock,
Edward Tilghman,
Thomas Ringold,
} Eſquires.

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From the province of South Carolina.

Thomas Lynch,
Chriſtopher Gadſden, } Eſquires.
John Rutledge,

Saturday, A. M. *October* 19, 1765.

The congreſs met according to adjournment, and reſumed, &c. as yeſterday, and upon mature deliberation, agreed to the following declarations of the rights and grievances of the coloniſts in America, which were ordered to be inſerted in their journals.

The members of this congreſs ſincerely devoted with the warmeſt ſentiments of affection and duty to his majeſty's perſon and government, inviolably attached to the preſent happy eſtabliſhment of the proteſtant ſucceſſion, and with minds deeply impreſſed by a ſenſe of the preſent and impending misfortunes of the Britiſh colonies on this continent; having conſidered as maturely as time will permit, the circumſtances of the ſaid colonies, eſteem it our indiſpenſable duty to make the following declarations of our humble opinion, reſpecting the moſt eſſential rights and liberties of the coloniſts, and of the grievances under which they labor, by reaſon of ſeveral late acts of parliament.

I. That his majeſty's ſubjects in theſe colonies, owe the ſame allegiance to the crown of Great Britain, that is owing from his ſubjects born within the realm, and all due ſubordination to that auguſt body, the parliament of Great Britain.

II. That his majeſty's liege ſubjects in theſe colonies, are entitled to all the inherent rights and liberties of his natural born ſubjects within the kingdom of Great Britain.

III. That it is inſeparably eſſential to the freedom of a people, and the undoubted right of Engliſhmen, that no taxes be impoſed on them, but with their own conſent, given perſonally, or by their repreſentatives.

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IV. That the people of theſe colonies are not, and from their local circumſtances cannot, be repreſented in the houſe of commons in Great Britain.

V. That the only repreſentatives of the people of theſe colonies are people choſen by themſelves, and that no taxes ever have been, or can be, conſtitutionally impoſed on them, but by their reſpective legiſlatures.

VI. That all ſupplies to the crown being free gifts of the people, it is unreaſonable and inconſiſtent with the principles and ſpirit of the Britiſh conſtitution, for the people of Great Britain to grant to his majeſty the property of the coloniſts.

VII. That trial by jury is the inherent and invaluable right of every Britiſh ſubject in theſe colonies.

VIII. That the late act of parliament, entitled, "An "act for granting and applying certain ſtamp-duties, and "other duties, in the Britiſh colonies and plantations in "America, &c." by impoſing taxes on the inhabitants of theſe colonies, and the ſame act, and ſeveral other acts, by extending the juriſdiction of the courts of admiralty beyond its ancient limits, have a manifeſt tendency to ſubvert the rights and liberties of the coloniſts.

IX. That the duties impoſed by ſeveral late acts of the Britiſh parliament, from the peculiar circumſtances of theſe colonies, will be extremely burthenſome and grievous; and from the ſcarcity of ſpecie, the payment of them abſolutely impracticable.

X. That as the profits of the trade of theſe colonies ultimately centre in Great Britain, to pay for the manufactures which they are obliged to take from thence, they eventually contribute very largely to all ſupplies granted there to the crown.

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XI. That the reſtrictions impoſed by ſeveral late acts of parliament on the trade of theſe colonies, will render them unable to purchaſe the manufactures of Great Britain.

XII. That the increaſe, proſperity, and happineſs of theſe colonies, depend on the full and free enjoyment of their rights and liberties, and an intercourſe with Great Britain, mutually affectionate and advantageous.

XIII. That it is the right of the Britiſh ſubjects in the colonies to petition the king, or either houſe of parliament.

LASTLY. That it is the indiſpenſable duty of theſe colonies, to the beſt of ſovereigns, to the mother country, and to themſelves, to endeavour by a loyal and dutiful addreſs to his majeſty, and humble applications to both houſes of parliament, to procure the repeal of the act for granting and applying certain ſtamp-duties; of all clauſes of any other acts of parliament, whereby the juriſdiction of the admiralty is extended as aforeſaid; and of the other late acts for the reſtriction of American commerce.

After theſe reſolves, they choſe Thomas Lynch, James Otis, and Thomas M'Kean, Eſquires, to prepare a petition to the houſe of commons. An addreſs to the king and to the houſe of lords, was alſo prepared and forwarded.

NOTE No. V. Page 49.

Copy from Mr. Dickenſon's original letter to Mr. Otis, accompanying the celebrated Farmer's Letters.

"*Philadelphia, Dec. 5,* 1767.

"DEAR SIR,

"The liberties of our common country appear "to me to be at this moment expoſed to the moſt imminent

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"danger; and this apprehenſion has engaged me to lay my "ſentiments before the public in letters, of which I ſend "you a copy.

"Only one has been yet publiſhed; and what their ef- "fect may be cannot yet be known. But whenever the "cauſe of American freedom is to be vindicated, I look to- "wards the province of Maſſachuſetts Bay. She muſt, as "ſhe has hitherto done, firſt kindle the ſacred flame, that "on ſuch occaſions muſt warm and illuminate this conti- "nent.

"Words are wanting to expreſs my ſenſe of the vigilance, "perſeverance, ſpirit, prudence, reſolution, and firmneſs, "with which your colony has diſtinguiſhed herſelf, in our "unhappy times. May God ever grant her noble labors "the ſame ſucceſsful iſſue which was obtained by the "repeal of the ſtamp-act.

"In my gratitude to your province in general, I do "not forget the obligations which all Americans are un- "der to you in particular, for the indefatigable zeal and "undaunted courage you have ſhewn in defending their "rights. My opinion of your love for your country, induces "me to commit to your hands the incloſed letters, to be "diſpoſed of as you think proper, not intending to give out "any other copy. I have ſhewn them to three men of "learning here, who are my friends. They think with me, "that the moſt deſtructive conſequences muſt follow, if "theſe colonies do not inſtantly, vigorouſly, and unani- "mouſly unite themſelves, in the ſame manner they did "againſt the ſtamp-act. Perhaps they and I are miſtaken: "I therefore ſend the piece containing the reaſons for this "opinion, to you, who I know can determine its true "worth; and if you can diſcover no other merit in it, per- "mit me at leaſt to claim the merit of having wrote it "with the moſt ardent affection for the Britiſh colonies, the "pureſt intentions to promote their welfare, an honeſt de-

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"fire to aſſert their rights, and with a deep ſenſe of their "impending misfortunes.

"Our cauſe is a cauſe of the higheſt dignity: it is noth-"ing leſs than to maintain the liberty with which Heaven "itſelf 'hath made us free.' I hope it will not be diſgra-"ced in any colony by a ſingle raſh ſtep. We have conſti-"tutional methods of ſeeking redreſs, and they are the beſt "methods.

"This ſubject leads me to inform you with pleaſure, be-"cauſe I think it muſt give you pleaſure, that the modera-"tion of your conduct in compoſing the minds of your fel-"low-citizens, has done you the higheſt credit with us. "You may be aſſured I feel a great ſatisfaction in hearing "your praiſes; for every thing that advances your reputa-"tion or intereſt, will always afford ſincere joy to, dear ſir,

"Your moſt affectionate, and
"Moſt humble ſervant,
"JOHN DICKENSON.

"*Hon. James Otis, jun. Eſq.*"

NOTE No. VI. Page 53.

This meaſure had been contemplated by ſeveral gentlemen, a year or two before it took place; among others, by the learned and excellent doctor Jonathan Mayhew of Boſton: ſee the annexed letter, written by him ſoon after the repeal of the ſtamp-act. The abilities, virtue, and patriotiſm of doctor Mayhew, were ſo diſtinguiſhed, that the following fragment may be pleaſing and particularly impreſſive, as it was the laſt letter he ever wrote to any one, and within three days after its date, this great and good man cloſed his eyes on the politics and vanities of human life.

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" *Lord's day morning, June* 8, 1766.

" HON. JAMES OTIS, JUN. ESQ.

" SIR,

" To a good man all time is holy enough, and " none too holy to do good, or to think upon it.

" Cultivating a good underſtanding and hearty friend- " ſhip between theſe colonies and their ſeveral houſes of " aſſembly, appears to me to be ſo neceſſary a part of pru- " dence and good policy, all things conſidered, that no " favorable opportunity for that purpoſe ought to be omit- " ted: I think ſuch an one now preſents. Would it not " be very proper and decorous, for our aſſembly to *ſend* " circular congratulatory letters to all the reſt, without " exception, on the *repeal*, and the preſent favorable aſpect " of things? Letters conceived at once in terms of warm " friendſhip and regard to them, of loyalty to the king, of " filial affection towards the mother country, and intimat- " ing a deſire to cement and perpetuate union among " ourſelves, by all practicable and laudable methods? A " good foundation is already laid for this latter, by the " late congreſs, which in my poor opinion was a wiſe " meaſure, and actually contributed not a little towards " our obtaining a redreſs of grievances, however ſome may " affect to diſparage it. Purſuing this track, and never " loſing ſight of it, may be of the utmoſt importance to " the colonies, on ſome future occaſions, perhaps the only " means of perpetuating their liberties; for what may be " hereafter we cannot tell, how favorable ſoever preſent " appearances may be. It is not ſafe for the colonies to " *ſleep*, ſince they will probably always have ſome *wakeful* " enemies in Britain; and if they ſhould be ſuch children " as to do ſo, I hope there are at leaſt ſome perſons too " much of men, and friends to them, to rock the cradle, or " ſing lullaby to them.

" You have heard of the *communion* of *churches*, and I " am very early to-morrow morning to ſet out for Rut-

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" land, to aſſiſt at an eccleſiaſtical council. Not expecting " to return this week, while I was thinking of this in my " bed, with the dawn of day, the great uſe and impor- " tance of a *communion* of *colonies*, appeared to me in a very " ſtrong light, which determined me immediately to ſet " down theſe hints, in order to tranſmit them to you. " Not knowing but the houſe may be prorogued or diſ- " ſolved before my return, or having an opportunity to " ſpeak to you, you will make ſuch a uſe of them as you " think proper, or none at all.

" I have had a ſight of the anſwer to the laſt very extra- " ordinary *ſpeech*,* with which I was much pleaſed. It " appears to me ſolid and judicious, and though ſpirited, " not more ſo than the caſe abſolutely required, unleſs we " could be content to have an abſolute and uncontrollable, " inſtead of a limited, conſtitutional g———r. I cannot " think the man will have one wiſe and good, much leſs " one truly great man at home, to ſtand by him in ſo open " and flagrant an attack upon our charter rights and priv- " ileges. But the leſs aſperity in language the better, pro- " vided there is firmneſs in adhering to our rights, in " oppoſition to all encroachments.

" I am, ſir,
" Your moſt obedient,
" Humble ſervant,
" JONATHAN MAYHEW."

NOTE No. VII. Page 54.

Copy of the circular letter which was ſent from the houſe of repreſentatives of the province of Maſſachuſetts Bay, to the ſpeakers of the reſpective houſes of repreſentatives and burgeſſes on the continent of North America.

* Speech of governor Bernard.

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" *Province of the Maſſachuſetts Bay, Feb.* 11, 1768.

" SIR,

" The houſe of repreſentatives of this province " have taken into their ſerious conſideration, the great " difficulties that muſt accrue to themſelves and their con- " ſtituents, by the operation of the ſeveral acts of parlia- " ment impoſing duties and taxes on the American col- " onies.

" As it is a ſubject in which every colony is deeply in- " tereſted, they have no reaſon to doubt but your houſe is " duly impreſſed with its importance; and that ſuch con- " ſtitutional meaſures will be come into as are proper. It " ſeems to be neceſſary, that all poſſible care ſhould be " taken that the repreſentations of the ſeveral aſſemblies, " upon ſo delicate a point, ſhould harmonize with each " other: the houſe therefore hope that this letter will be " candidly conſidered, in no other light than as expreſſing " a diſpoſition freely to communicate their mind to a ſiſter " colony, upon a common concern, in the ſame manner as " they would be glad to receive the ſentiments of your, or " any other houſe of aſſembly on the continent.

" The houſe have humbly repreſented to the miniſtry " their own ſentiments; that his majeſty's high court of " parliament is the ſupreme legiſlative power over the " whole empire; that in all free ſtates the conſtitution is " fixed; and as the ſupreme legiſlative derives its power " and authority from the conſtitution, it cannot overleap " the bounds of it, without deſtroying its foundation. " That the conſtitution aſcertains and limits both ſove- " reignty and allegiance; and therefore his majeſty's " American ſubjects, who acknowledge themſelves bound " by the ties of allegiance, have an equitable claim to the " full enjoyment of the fundamental rules of the Britiſh " conſtitution. That it is an eſſential, unalterable right in " nature, engrafted into the Britiſh conſtitution as a funda-

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" mental law, and ever held ſacred and irrevocable by the " ſubjects within the realm, that what a man hath honeſtly " acquired, is abſolutely his own, which he may freely " give, but cannot be taken from him without his conſent. " That the American ſubjects may therefore, excluſive of " any conſideration of charter rights, with a decent firm- " neſs, adapted to the character of freemen and ſubjects, " aſſert this natural, conſtitutional right.

" It is moreover their humble opinion, which they " expreſs with the greateſt deference to the wiſdom of the " parliament, that the acts made there, impoſing duties on " the people of this province for the ſole and expreſs pur- " poſe of raiſing a revenue, are infringements of their " natural and conſtitutional rights. Becauſe as they are " not repreſented in the Britiſh parliament, his majeſty's " commons in Britain, by thoſe acts grant their property " without their conſent.

" The houſe further are of opinion that their conſtitu- " ents, conſidering their local circumſtances, cannot by any " poſſibility be repreſented in the parliament; and that it " will forever be impracticable that they ſhould be equally " repreſented there, and conſequently not at all, being " ſeparated by an ocean of a thouſand leagues. That his " majeſty's royal predeceſſors for this reaſon were gra- " ciouſly pleaſed to form a ſubordinate legiſlative here, " that their ſubjects might enjoy the unalienable right of " a repreſentation. Alſo that conſidering the utter im- " practicability of their ever being fully and equally " repreſented in parliament, and the great expenſe that " muſt unavoidably attend even a partial repreſentation " there, this houſe think that a taxation of their conſtitu- " ents, even without their conſent, grievous as it is, would " be preferable to any repreſentation that could be admit- " ted for them there.

" Upon theſe principles, and alſo conſidering that were " the right in the parliament ever ſo clear, yet for obvious

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" reaſons it would be beyond the rule of equity, that their " conſtituents ſhould be taxed on the manufactures of Great " Britain here, in addition to the duties they pay for them " in England, and other advantages ariſing to Great Bri- " tain from the acts of trade; this houſe have preferred a " humble, dutiful, and loyal petition to our moſt gracious " ſovereign, and made ſuch repreſentations to his majeſty's " miniſters, as they apprehend would tend to obtain redreſs.

" They have alſo ſubmitted to conſideration, whether " any people can be ſaid to enjoy any degree of freedom, " if the crown in addition to its undoubted authority of " conſtituting a governor, ſhould appoint him ſuch a ſti- " pend as it ſhould judge proper, without the conſent of " the people, and at their expenſe: and whether while the " judges of the land and other civil officers, hold not their " commiſſions during good behaviour, their having ſalaries " appointed for them by the crown, independent of the " people, hath not a tendency to ſubvert the principles of " equity, and endanger the happineſs and ſecurity of the " ſubject.

" In addition to theſe meaſures, the houſe have wrote " a letter to their agent, Mr. De Berdt, the ſentiments of " which he is directed to lay before the miniſtry; wherein " they take notice of the hardſhip of the act for preventing " mutiny and deſertion, which requires the governor and " council to provide enumerated articles for the king's " marching troops, and the people to pay the expenſe; " and alſo the commiſſion of the gentlemen appointed " commiſſioners of the cuſtoms, to reſide in America, " which authorizes them to make as many appointments as " they think fit, and to pay the appointees what ſums " they pleaſe, for whoſe mal-conduct they are not account- " able. From whence it may happen that officers of the " crown may be multiplied to ſuch a degree, as to become " dangerous to the liberty of the people, by virtue of a " commiſſion which doth not appear to this houſe to de- " rive any ſuch advantages to trade as many have been led " to expect.

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"These are the sentiments and proceedings of this house; "and as they have too much reason to believe that the "enemies of the colonies have represented them to his "majesty's ministers, and the parliament, as factious, dis- "loyal, and having a disposition to make themselves inde- "pendent of the mother country, they have taken occasion "in the most humble terms, to assure his majesty and his "ministers, that with regard to the people of this province, "and as they doubt not of all the colonies, that the charge "is unjust.

"The house is fully satisfied that your assembly is too "generous, and enlarged in sentiment, to believe that this "letter proceeds from an ambition of taking the lead, or "dictating to the other assemblies; they freely submit their "opinion to the judgment of others, and shall take it kind "in your house to point out to them any thing further that "may be thought necessary.

"This house cannot conclude without expressing their "firm confidence in the king, our common head and "father, that the united and dutiful supplications of his dis- "tressed American subjects will meet with his royal and "favorable acceptance."

(Signed by the Speaker.)

A copy of the above letter was also, by order of the house, sent to Dennis De Berdt, Esq. agent to the province in London, that he might make use of it, if necessary, to prevent any misrepresentations in England.

NOTE No. VIII. Page 96.

A few extracts from the letters of Mr. Hutchinson to Mr. Jackson, Bollan, and others, the year previous to the disturbance in March, one thousand seven hun-

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dred and ſeventy, fully evince his ſentiments of ſtationing and retaining troops in the capital of the Maſſachuſetts.

"*Boſton, January*, 1769.

"DEAR SIR,

"I ſent you under a blank cover, by way of "Briſtol and Glaſgow, the account of proceedings in New "York aſſembly, which you will find equal to thoſe of "the Maſſachuſetts. Perhaps if they had no troops, the "people too would have run riot as we did. Five or ſix "men of war, and three or four regiments, diſturb nobody "but ſome of our grave people, who do not love aſſem-"blies and concerts, and cannot bear the noiſe of drums "upon a Sunday. I know I have not ſlept in town any "three months theſe two years, in ſo much tranquillity, as "I have done the three months ſince the troops came."

Extract of a letter from Mr. Bollan to Mr. Hutchinſon.

"*Henrietta Street, Auguſt* 11, 1767.

"Mr. Paxton has ſeveral times told me, that "you and ſome other of my friends were of opinion, that "ſtanding troops were neceſſary to ſupport the authority "of the government at Boſton, and that he was authorized "to inform me this was your and their opinion. I need "not ſay that I hold in the greateſt abomination ſuch out-"rages that have taken place among you, and am ſenſible "it is the duty of all charter, or other ſubordinate govern-"ments, to take due care, and puniſh ſuch proceedings; "and that all governments muſt be ſupported by force, "when neceſſary; yet we muſt remember how often ſtand-"ing forces have introduced greater miſchiefs than they "retrieved, and I am apprehenſive that your diſtant ſitua-"tion from the centre of all civil and military power, "might in this caſe, ſooner or later, ſubject you to peculiar "difficulties.

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" When Malcolm's bad behaviour made a ſtir here, a " miniſter who ſeemed inclined to make uſe of ſtanding " forces, ſuppoſing this might not be agreeable to me, I " avoided giving an opinion, which then appeared needleſs " and improper, but afterwards, when it was confidently " ſaid, that preparations were making to ſend a conſidera- " ble number of ſtanding troops, in order to compel obedi- " ence, I endeavoured to prevent it."

Mr. Bollan goes on to obſerve, that " he had informed " ſome influential gentlemen in England, that he had the " higheſt reaſon to believe, that whoever ſhould be inſtru- " mental in ſending over ſtanding troops to America, " would be curſed to all poſterity."

Extract from governor Hutchinſon's letters to gov- ernor Pownal. It is, uncertain on what occaſion the following aſſertion was made, but it diſcovers the ſpirit and wiſhes of the writer.

" *Boſton, June* 22, 1772.

" The union of the colonies is pretty well broke; " I hope I ſhall never ſee it renewed. Indeed our ſons of " liberty are hated and deſpiſed by their former brethren " in New York and Pennſylvania, and it muſt be ſome- " thing very extraordinary ever to reconcile them."

NOTE No. IX. Page 113.

Extracts from Mr. Hutchinſon's letters to Mr. Jack- ſon, Pownal, and others.

" *Boſton, Auguſt* 27, 1772.

" But before America is ſettled in peace, it " would be neceſſary to go to the bottom of all the diſor- " der, which has been ſo long neglected already. The " opinion that every colony has a legiſlature within itſelf,

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" the acts and doings of which are not to be controlled by
" parliament, and that no legiſlative power ought to be
" exerciſed over the colonies, except by their reſpective
" legiſlatures, gains ground every day, and it has an influ-
" ence upon all the executive parts of government. Grand
" juries will not preſent; petit juries will not convict the
" higheſt offenders againſt acts of parliament: our news-
" papers publickly announce this independence every
" week; and, what is much more, there is ſcarce an aſſem-
" bly which has not done it at one time or another. The
" aſſembly of this province has done as much the laſt ſeſ-
" ſion by their public votes and reſolves, and by an addreſs
" which they have ſent to doctor Franklin, to be preſented
" to the king; ſo there is ſufficient grounds for parliament
" to proceed, if there is a diſpoſition. What, it will be
" ſaid, can be done? A teſt as general as the oaths re-
" quired inſtead of the oaths of allegiance and ſupremacy,
" would be moſt effectual; but this there is reaſon to fear
" would throw America into a general confuſion, and I
" doubt the expediency. But can leſs be done than affix-
" ing penalties, and diſqualifications or incapacities, upon
" all who by word or writing ſhall deny or call in queſtion
" the ſupreme authority of parliament over all parts of the
" Britiſh dominions? Can it be made neceſſary for all
" judges to be under oath, to obſerve all acts of parliament
" in their judgments? And may not the oaths of all jurors,
" grand and petit, be ſo framed as to include acts of par-
" liament as the rule of law, as well as law in general
" terms? And for aſſemblies or bodies of men, who ſhall
" deny the authority of parliament, may not all their
" ſubſequent proceedings be declared to be *ipſo facto* null
" and void, and every member who ſhall continue to act in
" ſuch aſſembly be ſubject to penalties and incapacities?
" I ſuggeſt theſe things for conſideration. Every thing
" depends upon the ſettlement of this grand point. We
" owe much of our troubles to the countenance given
" by ſome in England to this doctrine of independence.
" If the people were convinced that the nation with one
" voice condemned the doctrine, or that parliament at all

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"events, was determined to maintain its ſupremacy, we "ſhould ſoon be quiet. The demagogues who generally "have no property, would continue their endeavours to "inflame the minds of the people for ſome time; but "the people in general have real eſtates, which they "would not run the hazard of forfeiting, by any treaſona- "ble meaſures. If nothing more can be done, there muſt "be further proviſions for carrying the act of trade into "execution, which I am informed adminiſtration are very "ſenſible of, and have meaſures in contemplation. Thus "you have a few of my ſudden thoughts, which I muſt "pray you not to communicate as coming from me, leſt I "ſhould be ſuppoſed here to have contributed to any fu- "ture proceedings reſpecting America. I have only room "to add that I am, with ſincere reſpect and eſteem,

"Your's, &c."

"*Boſton, December* 8, 1772.

"TO MR. JACKSON.

[*Private.*]

"DEAR SIR,

"They ſucceed in their unwearied endeav- "ours to propagate the doctrine of independence upon "parliament, and the miſchiefs of it every day increaſe. "I believe I have repeatedly mentioned to you my opin- "ion of the neceſſity of parliament's taking ſome meaſures "to prevent the ſpread of this doctrine, as well as to guard "againſt the miſchiefs of it. It is more difficult now, "than it was the laſt year, and it will become more and "more ſo every year it is neglected, until it is utterly "impracticable. If I conſulted nothing but my own eaſe "and quiet, I would propoſe neglect and contempt of eve- "ry affront offered to parliament by the little American "aſſemblies, but I ſhould be falſe to the king, and betray "the truſt he has repoſed in me. * * * * * * *

"* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

"* * * * * You ſee no difference between the "caſe of the colonies and that of Ireland. I care not in

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" how favorable a light you look upon the colonies, if it " does not ſeparate us from you. You will certainly find " it more difficult to retain the colonies, than you do Ire- " land. Ireland is near and under your conſtant inſpec- " tion. All officers are dependent, and removable at " pleaſure. The colonies are remote, and the officers " generally more diſpoſed to pleaſe the people than the " king, or his repreſentative. In the one, you have always " the *ultima ratio;* in the other, you are either deſtitute of " it, or you have no civil magiſtrate to direct the uſe of it. " Indeed, to prevent a general revolt, the naval power " may for a long courſe of years be ſufficient, but to pre- " ſerve the peace of the colonies, and to continue them " beneficial to the mother country, this will be to little " purpoſe: but I am writing to a gentleman who knows " theſe things better than I do."

" *Boſton, January*, 1773.

" JOHN POWNAL, ESQ.

" MY DEAR SIR,

" I have not anſwered your very kind and con- " fidential letter of the 6th of October. Nothing could " could confirm me more in my own plan of meaſures for " the colonies, than finding it to agree with your ſentiments. " You know I have been begging for meaſures to maintain " the ſupremacy of parliament. Whilſt it is ſuffered to be " denied, all is confuſion, and the oppoſition to govern- " ment is continually gaining ſtrength."

" *Boſton, April* 19, 1773.

" JOHN POWNAL, ESQ.

" DEAR SIR,

" Our patriots ſay that the votes of the town of " Boſton, which they ſent to Virginia, have produced the " reſolves of the aſſembly there, appointing a committee " of correſpondence; and I have no doubt it is their ex-

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" pectation, that a committee for the ſame purpoſe will be " appointed by moſt of the other aſſemblies on the conti- " nent. If any thing therefore be done by parliament " reſpecting America, it now ſeems neceſſary that it ſhould " be general, and not confined to particular colonies, as the " ſame ſpirit prevails every where, though not in the like " degree."

" *Boſton, October* 18, 1773.

" JOHN POWNAL, ESQ.

[*Private.*]

" DEAR SIR,

" The leaders of the party give out openly that " they muſt have another convention of all the colonies; " and the ſpeaker has made it known to ſeveral of the " members, that the agent in England recommends it as a " meaſure neceſſary to be engaged in without delay, and " propoſes, in order to bring the diſpute to a criſis, that " the rights of the colonies ſhould be there ſolemnly and " fully aſſerted and declared; that there ſhould be a firm " engagement with each other, that they will never grant " any aid to the crown, even in caſe of war, unleſs the " king and the two houſes of parliament firſt recognize " thoſe rights; and that the reſolution ſhould be immedi- " ately communicated to the crown; and aſſumes them, " that in this way they will finally obtain their end.

" I am not fond of conveying this ſort of intelligence; " but as I have the fulleſt evidence of the fact, I do not " ſee how I can be faithful to my truſt and neglect it; " therefore, though I conſider this as a private letter, yet " I leave it to you to communicate this part of it, ſo far as " his majeſty's ſervice may require, and as I have nothing " but that in view, I wiſh it may go no further. The " meaſure appears to me, of all others, the moſt likely to " rekindle a general flame in the colonies."

The above extracts were taken from governor Hutchinſon's letter book, found after he repaired to England, de-

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poſited in a ſecret corner of his houſe at Milton. If the reader wiſhes a further gratification of his curioſity in regard to the ſubtil ſtratagems of Mr. Hutchinſon, he is referred to the whole collection, as publiſhed in England.

NOTE No. X. Page 150.

Names of the members of the American congreſs, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-four.

Peyton Randolph, Preſident.

New Hampshire. John Sullivan, Nathaniel Folſom.

Massachusetts Bay. Thomas Cuſhing, Samuel Adams, John Adams, Robert Treat Paine.

Rhode Island. Stephen Hopkins, Samuel Ward.

Connecticut. Eliphalet Dyer, Roger Sherman, Silas Deane.

New York. Iſaac Low, John Alſop, John Jay, James Duane, William Floyd, Henry Weiſner, Samuel Bocrum.

New Jersey. James Kinſey, William Livingſton, Stephen Crane, Richard Smith.

Pennsylvania. Joſeph Galloway, Charles Humphreys, John Dickenſon, Thomas Mifflin, Edward Biddle, John Morton, George Roſs.

Newcastle, &c. Cæſar Rodney, Thomas M'Kean, George Read.

Maryland. Matthew Tilghman, Thomas Johnſon, William Paca, Samuel Chaſe.

Virginia. Richard Henry Lee, George Waſhington, Patrick Henry, jun. Richard Bland, Benjamin Harriſon, Edmund Pendleton.

North Carolina. William Hooper, Joſeph Hewes, R. Caſwell.

South Carolina. Henry Middleton, Thomas Lynch, Chriſtopher Gadſden, John Rutledge, Edward Rutledge.

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NOTE No. XI. Page 180.

Extract of a letter from governor Hutchinſon to commodore Gambier.

"*Boſton, June* 30, 1772.

"DEAR SIR,

"* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

"* * * * * * * *. Our laſt ſhips carried you "the news of the burning the Gaſpee ſchooner at Provi- "dence. I hope if there ſhould be another like attempt, "ſome concerned in it may be taken priſoners and carried "directly to England. A few puniſhed at Execution "Dock, would be the only effectual preventive of any "further attempts. * * * * * * * * * * * * "* * * * * * * *."

On the ſame ſubject, to ſecretary Pownal.

"*Boſton, Auguſt* 29, 1772.

"DEAR SIR,

"I troubled you with a long letter the 21ſt of "July. Give me leave now only to add one or two things "which I then intended, but to avoid being too tedious, "omitted. People in this province, both friends and ene- "mies to government, are in great expectations from the "late affair at Rhode Iſland of burning the king's ſchooner, "and they conſider the manner in which the news of it will "be received in England, and the meaſures to be taken, as "deciſive. If it is paſſed over without a full inquiry and "due reſentment, our liberty people will think they may "with impunity commit any acts of violence, be they ever "ſo atrocious, and the friends to government will deſpond, "and give up all hopes of being able to withſtand the "faction. The perſons who were the immediate actors, "are men of eſtate and property in the colony. A proſe- "cution is impoſſible. If ever the government of that

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" colony is to be reformed, this ſeems to be the time, and " it would have a happy effect in the colonies which adjoin " to it. Several perſons have been adviſed by letters from " their friends, that as the miniſtry are united, and oppoſi- " tion at an end, there will certainly be an inquiry into the " ſtate of America, the next ſeſſion of parliament. The " denial of the ſupremacy of parliament, and the contempt " with which its authority has been treated by the Lilli- " putian aſſemblies of America, can never be juſtified or " excuſed by any one member of either houſe of parliament.

" * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

" * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

" * * * * * *."

" *Boſton, September* 2, 1772.

" SAMUEL HOOD, ESQ.

" DEAR SIR,

" Captain Linzee can inform you of the ſtate of " Rhode Iſland colony better than I can. So daring an " inſult as burning the king's ſchooner, by people who are " as well known as any who were concerned in the laſt " rebellion, and yet cannot be proſecuted, will certainly " rouſe the Britiſh lion, which has been aſleep theſe four or " five years. Admiral Montague ſays, that lord Sandwich " will never leave purſuing the colony, until it is disfran- " chiſed. If it is paſſed over, the other colonies will follow " the example."

NOTE No. XII. Page 208.

The ſufferings of the colony of Virginia, under lord Dunmore's adminiſtration, and the ſpirit and magnanimity of the inhabitants, might claim a larger detail in this narrative; but ſo diſtinguiſhed have been many of their leading characters, through all the tranſactions of the great conteſt, from the introduction of the reſolves by Patrick Henry, in the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-five, to the

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elevation of Mr. Jefferſon to the preſidential chair in one thouſand eight hundred and one, as to be ſufficient to furniſh ample materials for a volume by itſelf. But every hiſtorical record of the American revolution and its conſequences, muſt neceſſarily introduce the names of many illuſtrious characters that have adorned and dignified the ſtate of Virginia.

NOTE No. XIII. Page 215.

Mr. Hancock retained his popularity to the end of his life. His death did not take place until the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-three. He was choſen governor of the Maſſachuſetts in one thouſand ſeven hundred and eighty, and though a remarkable debilitation of body rendered him to appearance little able to diſcharge the duties of the firſt magiſtrate, yet the ſuffrages of the people kept him long in the chair, after he was reduced to ſuch a ſtate of weakneſs as to be lifted by his ſervants into his carriage, and thence into the ſtate houſe, to deliver his public ſpeeches. In this he acquitted himſelf with a degree of elocution, pleaſing and popular, though his health did not admit of his writing them previouſly, and ſeldom had he ſtrength to add his ſignature to the acts of the legiſlature. But his mental faculties were not much impaired by the infirmities of his bodily conſtitution; they were not indeed compoſed of thoſe elementary ſparks of genius that ſoon burn themſelves out; nor were the energies of his mind blunted by induſtry and application.

He had been ſo long habituated to ideas of independence, that after they were thoroughly fixed in his mind, he uniformly retained his principles to the laſt. He was againſt the conſolidation of the general government, and the monarchical views of many who had riſen to power before he had finiſhed his career of life. He ſupported his opinion of the ſovereignty of the individual ſtates, in a

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manly manner, in one of his laſt tranſactions of a public nature; this was his conduct relative to the ſuability of the ſtates. An experiment made by a proceſs commenced againſt the Maſſachuſetts, in favor of William Vaſſal, Eſq., the governor of the ſtate was ſummoned by a writ to anſwer to the proſecution. He declined the ſmalleſt conceſſion that might leſſen the independence and ſovereignty of each ſtate, and ſupported his opinion with firmneſs and dignity equally popular and honorable to himſelf. Litigations of this nature were ſoon after barred, by an amendment in the conſtitution of the United States.

An ample meaſure of gratitude was repaid to Mr. Hancock, both for public ſervices and private benefits; a mantle of love was thrown over his foibles by his countrymen, and his memory was embalmed in the affections of his townſmen.

NOTE No. XIV. Page 226.

The ſtate of Maſſachuſetts continued this mode of legiſlation and government until the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and eighty, when a convention was called for the purpoſe, and a more ſtable form adopted: by this, a governor, lieutenant governor, ſenate, and houſe of repreſentatives were to be choſen by the free ſuffrages of the people; a council of nine were to be choſen by the legiſlative, either from the ſenate or the people at large.

NOTE No. XV. Page 265.

Copy of general Montgomery's laſt letter to general Carleton.

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" *Holland Houſe, December* 6, 1775.

" SIR,

" Notwithſtanding the perſonal ill treatment I " have received at your hands, notwithſtanding the cruelty " you have ſhewn to the unhappy priſoners you have taken, " the feelings of humanity induce me to have recourſe to " this expedient, to ſave you from the deſtruction which " hangs over your wretched garriſon. Give me leave to " inform you, that I am well acquainted with your ſitua- " tion; a great extent of works, in their nature incapable " of defence, manned with a motley crew of ſailors, moſt " of them our friends and citizens, who wiſh to ſee us with- " in their walls,—a few of the worſt troops that call them- " ſelves ſoldiers,—the impoſſibility of relief, and the certain " proſpect of wanting every neceſſary of life, ſhould your " opponents confine their operations to a ſingle blockade,— " point out the abſurdity of reſiſtance; ſuch is your ſit- " uation.

" I am at the head of troops accuſtomed to ſucceſs, con- " fident of the righteous cauſe they are engaged in, inured " to danger and fatigue, and ſo highly incenſed at your " inhumanity, illiberal abuſe, and the ungenerous means " employed to prejudice them in the minds of the Cana- " dians, that it is with difficulty I reſtrain them till my " batteries are ready, from inſulting your works, which " would afford them the fair opportunity of ample ven- " geance and juſt retaliation. Firing upon a flag of truce, " hitherto unprecedented, even among ſavages, prevents " my following the ordinary mode of conveying my ſenti- " ments; however I will at any rate acquit my conſcience: " ſhould you perſiſt in an unwarrantable defence, the conſe- " quence be upon your own head. Beware of deſtroying " ſtores of any ſort, public or private, as you did at Mon- " treal or in the river: if you do, by heavens, there will be " no mercy ſhewn."

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NOTE No. XVI. Page 278.

The many proteſts of a number of the houſe of lords, which appeared from time to time againſt the high meaſures of a majority in parliament, epitomize the American grievances in a point of view that exhibited the opinion at the time, of a very conſiderable part of the moſt judicious and unprejudiced perſons through the nation, both in and out of parliament. Theſe proteſts may be found in a variety of Britiſh publications.

This general favorable diſpoſition towards the Americans in the early part of the conteſt, was evinced by numberleſs circumſtances; a crimination of the meaſures of adminiſtration againſt the colonies, exiſted on both ſides of the Tweed, and indeed throughout the kingdom. Many letters, and other excellent writings on the ſubject of civil and religious liberty, were tranſmitted from England to America, from the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-five, until the period when hoſtilities commenced. Among the numberleſs inſtances that might be adduced, of the ſpirit and diſpoſition of the writers of thoſe times, we will here only give the following extract of a letter from the earl of Buchan to Mr. Otis; this was accompanied by ſome very excellent eſſays on the ſubject of liberty, and by ſeveral portraits of his perſon, adorned at the foot with a cap of liberty in the centre of the annexed motto, "Ubi "libertas, ibi patria."

"*London, January* 26, 1768.

"SIR,

"I take the liberty of tranſmitting to you the "incloſed repreſentations of a man, ſtrongly attached to "the principles of that invaluable liberty, without which "no real happineſs can ſubſiſt any where.

"My family has often bled in the ſupport of it; and "deſcended as I am, from the Engliſh Henrys and Ed-

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" wards, I glory more in the baniſhment of my great-
" grandfather, lord Cardroſs, to Carolina, and the ſtand
" made by lord Halifax, my anceſtor, than in all that title
" and deſcent can give me.

" You may diſpoſe of the other prints to the lovers of
" my principles; and I beg you will be ſo good as to
" tranſmit four of them to Meſſrs. * * * * * * *
" * * * * * * * * * * * as eminent defenders
" of thoſe doctrines in the church, which are ſo intimately
" connected with liberty in the ſtate. * * * * * *
" * * * * * * * Lord Chatham† has forſaken
" you, having loved this world; but his favorite, your
" humble ſervant, will not, I truſt, ever follow his ſteps.

" I am, ſir, with great regard,
" Your moſt obedient, humble ſervant,
" BUCHAN.

" *James Otis, Eſq. Boſton.*"

NOTE No. XVII. Page 309.

In CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

A DECLARATION by the REPRESENTATIVES of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA in GENERAL CONGRESS aſſembled.

When in the courſe of human events, it becomes neceſſary for one people to diſſolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to aſſume among the powers of the earth, the ſeparate and equal ſtation to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent reſpect to the opinions of mankind requires, that they ſhould declare the cauſes which impel them to the ſeparation.

† Lord Chatham afterwards totally reprobated the conduct of adminiſtration towards the colonies.

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We hold theſe truths to be ſelf-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights: that among theſe are life, liberty, and the purſuit of happineſs: that to ſecure theſe rights, governments are inſtituted among men, deriving their juſt powers from the conſent of the governed: and whenever any form of government becomes deſtructive of theſe ends, it is the right of the people to alter or aboliſh it, and to inſtitute a new government, laying its foundation on ſuch principles, and organizing its powers in ſuch form, as to them ſhall ſeem moſt likely to effect their ſafety and happineſs. Prudence indeed will dictate that governments long eſtabliſhed, ſhould not be changed for light and tranſient cauſes; and accordingly, all experience hath ſhewn, that mankind are more diſpoſed to ſuffer, while evils are ſufferable, than to right themſelves by aboliſhing the forms to which they are accuſtomed: but when a long train of abuſes and uſurpations, purſuing invariably the ſame object, evinces a deſign to reduce them under abſolute deſpotiſm, it is their right, it is their duty to throw off ſuch government, and to provide new guards for their future ſecurity. Such has been the patient ſufferance of theſe colonies, and ſuch is now the neceſſity which conſtrains them to alter their former ſyſtems of government. The hiſtory of the preſent king of Great Britain, is a hiſtory of repeated injuries and uſurpations; all having in direct object the eſtabliſhment of an abſolute tyranny over theſe ſtates: to prove this, let facts be ſubmitted to a candid world.

He has refuſed his aſſent to laws, the moſt wholeſome and neceſſary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to paſs laws of immediate and preſſing importance, unleſs ſuſpended in their operation till his aſſent ſhould be obtained; and when ſo ſuſpended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refuſed to paſs other laws, for the accommodation of large diſtricts of people, unleſs thoſe people would

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relinquiſh the rights of repreſentation in the legiſlature; a right ineſtimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legiſlative bodies at places unuſual, uncomfortable, and diſtant from the depoſitory of their public records, for the ſole purpoſe of fatiguing them into compliance with his meaſures.

He has diſſolved repreſentative houſes repeatedly, for oppoſing, with manly firmneſs, his invaſions on the rights of the people.

He has refuſed, for a long time after ſuch diſſolution, to cauſe others to be erected, whereby the legiſlative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exerciſe,—the ſtate remaining in the mean time, expoſed to all the dangers of invaſion from without, and convulſions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of theſe ſtates; for that purpoſe, obſtructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners, refuſing to paſs others to encourage their migrations hither, and raiſing the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has obſtructed the adminiſtration of juſtice, by refuſing his aſſent to laws for eſtabliſhing judiciary powers.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their ſalaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and ſent hither ſwarms of officers, to haraſs our people, and eat out their ſubſiſtence.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, ſtanding armies, without the conſent of our legiſlatures.

He has affected to render the military independent of, and ſuperior to, the civil power.

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He has combined with others, to ſubject us to a juriſdiction foreign to our conſtitution, and unacknowledged by our laws, giving his aſſent to their pretended acts of legiſlation:

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

For protecting them, by a mock trial, from puniſhment for any murders which they ſhould commit on the inhabitants of theſe ſtates:

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world:

For impoſing taxes on us without our conſent:

For depriving us, in many caſes, of the benefit of trial by jury:

For tranſporting us beyond ſeas, to be tried for pretended offences:

For aboliſhing the free ſyſtem of Engliſh laws in a neighbouring province, eſtabliſhing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, ſo as to render it at once an example and fit inſtrument for introducing the ſame abſolute rule into theſe colonies:

For taking away our charters, aboliſhing our moſt valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments:

For ſuſpending our own legiſlatures, and declaring themſelves inveſted with power to legiſlate for us in all caſes whatſoever.

He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection, and waging war againſt us.

He has plundered our ſeas, ravaged our coaſts, burnt our towns, and deſtroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time tranſporting large armies of foreign mercenaries, to complete the works of death, deſolation, and tyranny, already begun with circumſtances of cruelty and perfidy, ſcarcely paralleled in the moſt barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

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He has conſtrained our fellow-citizens, taken captive on the high ſeas, to bear arms againſt their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themſelves by their hands.

He has excited domeſtic inſurrections amongſt us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the mercileſs Indian ſavages, whoſe known rule of warfare is, an undiſtinguiſhed deſtruction of all ages, ſexes, and conditions.

In every ſtage of theſe oppreſſions, we have petitioned for redreſs, in the moſt humble terms: our repeated petitions have been anſwered only by repeated injury. A prince, whoſe character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in attention to our Britiſh brethren. We have warned them, from time to time, of attempts, by their legiſlature, to extend an unwarrantable juriſdiction over us; we have reminded them of the circumſtances of our emigration and ſettlement here; we have appealed to their native juſtice and magnanimity; and we have conjured them, by the ties of our common kindred, to diſavow theſe uſurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connexions and correſpondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of juſtice and conſanguinity. We muſt therefore acquieſce in the neceſſity which denounces our ſeparation, and hold them, as we hold the reſt of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.

We therefore, the repreſentatives of the United States of America, in general congreſs aſſembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by the authority of the good people of theſe colonies, ſolemnly publiſh and declare, that theſe united colonies are, and of right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; and that they are abſolved

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from all allegiance to the Britiſh crown; and that all political connexion between them and the ſtate of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally diſſolved; and that, as free and independent ſtates, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, eſtabliſh commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent ſtates may of right do. And for the ſupport of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our ſacred honor.

Signed by order and in behalf of the congreſs,
JOHN HANCOCK, PRESIDENT.

Atteſt:—
CHARLES THOMPSON, SECRETARY.

NOTE No. XVIII. Page 357.

Copy of a letter from general Lee to doctor B. Ruſh. See life and memoirs of general Lee.

"*Camp at Valley Forge, June* 4, 1778.

"MY DEAR RUSH,

"Though I had no occaſion for freſh aſſurances "of your friendſhip, I cannot help being much pleaſed "with the warmth which your letter, delivered to me by "Mr. H***, breathes; and I hope, it is unneceſſary to "aſſure you, that my ſentiments, with reſpect to you, are "correſpondent.

"You will think it odd, that I ſhould ſeem to be an "apologiſt for general Howe: I know not how it happens; "but when I have taken prejudices in favor, or againſt a "man, I find it a difficulty in ſhaking them off. From my "firſt acquaintance with Mr. Howe, I liked him: I thought "him friendly, candid, good natured, brave, and rather "ſenſible than the reverſe: I believe ſtill that he is natur-"ally ſo; but a corrupt, or more properly, no education,

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" the faſhion of the times, and the reigning idolatry amongſt " the Engliſh, (particularly the ſoldiery;) for every ſcep- " tred calf, wolf, or aſs, have ſo totally perverted his " underſtanding and heart, that private friendſhip has not " force ſufficient to keep a door open for the admittance " of mercy towards political heretics. He was beſides " perſuaded that I was doubly criminal, both as a traitor " and deſerter. In ſhort, ſo totally was he inebriated with " this idea, that I am convinced he would have thought " himſelf both politically and morally damned, had he " acted any other part than what he did. He is beſides, " the moſt indolent of mortals; never took further pains " to examine the merits or demerits of the cauſe in which " he was engaged, than merely to recollect, that Great " Britain was ſaid to be the mother country, George the " third king of Great Britain, that the parliament was " called the repreſentatives of Great Britain, that the king " and parliament formed the ſupreme power, that a ſu- " preme power is abſolute and uncontrollable, that all " reſiſtance muſt conſequently be rebellion; but above all, " that he was a ſoldier, and bound to obey in all caſes " whatever.

" Theſe are his notions, and this his logic: but through " theſe abſurdities, I could diſtinguiſh, when he was left " to himſelf, rays of friendſhip and good nature breaking " out. It is true, he was ſeldom left to himſelf; for never " poor mortal, thruſt into high ſtation, was ſurrounded by " ſuch fools and ſcoundrels. M'Kenzie, Balfour, Gallo- " way, were his counſellors; they urged him to all his acts " of harſhneſs; they were his ſcribes; all the damned ſtuff " which was iſſued to the aſtoniſhed world was their's. I " believe he ſcarcely ever read the letters he ſigned. You " will ſcarcely believe it, but I can aſſure you as a fact, " that he never read the curious proclamation, iſſued at the " Head of Elk, till three days after it was publiſhed. You " will ſay, that I am drawing my friend Howe in more " ridiculous colors than he has yet been repreſented in; " but this is his real character. He is naturally good

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" humored, complaiſant, but illiterate and indolent to the " laſt degree, unleſs as an executive ſoldier, in which capa- " city he is all fire and activity, brave and cool as Julius " Cæſar. His underſtanding is, as I obſerved before, rather " good than otherwiſe, but was totally confounded and " ſtupified by the immenſity of the taſk impoſed upon him. " He ſhut his eyes, fought his battles, drank his bottle, had " his little *****, adviſed with his counſellors, received his " orders from North and Germaine, (one more abſurd than " the other,) took Galloway's opinion, ſhut his eyes, fought " again, and is now, I ſuppoſe, to be called to account for " acting according to inſtructions. But I believe his eyes " are now opened; he ſees he has been an inſtrument of " wickedneſs and folly; indeed, when I obſerved it to him, " he not only took patiently the obſervation, but indirectly " aſſented to the truth of it. He made, at the ſame time, " as far as his *mauvais honte* would permit, an apology for " his treatment of me.

" Thus far with regard to Mr. Howe. You are ſtruck " with the great events, changes, and new characters, which " have appeared on the ſtage ſince I ſaw you laſt; but I " am more ſtruck with the admirable efficacy of blunders. " It ſeemed to be a trial of ſkill, which party ſhould outdo " the other; and it is hard to ſay which played the deepeſt " ſtrokes; but it was a capital one of ours, which certainly " gave the happy turn which affairs have taken. Upon " my ſoul, it was time for fortune to interpoſe, or we were " inevitably loſt; but this we will talk over another time. " I ſuppoſe we ſhall ſee one another at Philadelphia very " ſoon, in attendance. God bleſs you!

" Your's, affectionately,

" CHARLES LEE."

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NOTE No. XIX. Page 362.

The iniquitous conduct of ſpeculators and ſwindlers, to ſecure to themſelves the poſſeſſion of moſt of the public ſecurities, will leave a ſtain on a large claſs of people, who by every art endeavoured to ſink the faith of congreſs. Indeed their attempts to injure the credit of all public bodies, were attended with the moſt pernicious conſequences to the honeſt and unſuſpecting holders of public paper. By every inſidious practice, they induced the ignorant and neceſſitous, to part with their ſecurities for the moſt trifling conſiderations, to ſupply their immediate wants. Thus afterwards, when a new conſtitution of government was formed, and a funding ſyſtem created, no diſcrimination was made in favor of the original holders, who had diſpoſſeſſed themſelves of the public ſecurities. Thoſe who had gained them by their artificial deception, were enriched beyond all calculation by ſubſequent circumſtances: they afterwards received the nominal value in ſpecie, while many of the former holders were reduced to extreme poverty.

It was pathetically obſerved, by one who felt theſe inconveniencies, that "the public ſecurities, tired of their "humble abodes, had ſoon fled to the ſplendid ſeats of "wealth and greatneſs; and that while they remained "with a claſs who had dearly earned them by their ſer-"vices, no intereſt was promiſed, no time, place, or perſon "aſcertained, to direct our application for payment. They "fell into diſgrace, which concurring with our neceſſities, "as they could yield no preſent comfort or future hope, "induced us to part with them for the moſt trifling con-"ſiderations: but when they had choſen their elevated "reſidence, their credit revived, and proviſion was made "for the payment of intereſt upon them. We, in event, "literally ſold them for nothing, and are obliged to pay "their preſent holders an annual ſum for keeping them in "poſſeſſion; for many of us have, or muſt ſoon pay for the

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" intereſt of them, a ſum nearly or quite equal to the money " given to purchaſe them, and ſtill be annually taxed to " diſcharge the intereſt and principal of ſaid ſecurities."

This is an anticipation of what literally took place afterwards, though it is but juſtice to obſerve, that Mr. Madiſon of Virginia, a diſtinguiſhed member of congreſs, and ſeveral others of that body, left no rational argument untried, to procure a diſcrimination, when the funding ſyſtem was about to be introduced in one thouſand ſeven hundred and eighty-eight, that would have made ſome equitable compenſation to the original holders of public ſecurities, and prevented a ſudden accumulation of wealth to a claſs of men, who had, many of them, never earned by their own private induſtry, or their ſervices to the public, ſufficient for a competent ſupport. They grew rich on the property of thoſe who had ſuffered in the ſervice of their country, who were left to complain, without a poſſibility of redreſs.

NOTE No. XX. Page 400.

Extracts of a ſhort account of the treatment of major general Conway, late in the ſervice of America, from general Lee's letters.

" On Monday the 23d of November, 1778, the honora- " ble major general Conway ſet out from Philadelphia, on " his return to France. The hiſtory of the treatment this " gentleman has received, is ſo ſingular, that it muſt make " a figure in the anecdotes of mankind. He was born in " Ireland, but at the age of ſix was carried into France; " was bred up from his infancy to the profeſſion of arms; " and it is univerſally allowed, by the gentlemen of that " nation, that he has, in their ſervice, the reputation of " being what is called un tres brave major d'infanterie, " which is no ſmall character; it implies, if I comprehend

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" the term aright, a man poſſeſſed of all the requiſite qual-
" ities to fill the duties of a general officer in the ſecondary
" line, but by no means ranks him among thoſe favored
" mortals, to whom it has pleaſed God to give ſo large a
" portion of the etherial ſpirit, as to render reading, theory,
" and practice unneceſſary; but with the ſpectacle of this
" phenomena, Heaven entertains the earth but very ſeldom;
" Greece, as hiſtorians report, had but one; Rome none;
" England and France, only one each. As to this hem-
" iſphere, I ſhall be ſilent on the ſubject, leſt I ſhould be
" ſuſpected of not being ſerious. But be this as it may, it
" is paſt doubt that general Conway is a man of excellent
" underſtanding, quick and penetrating,—that he has ſeen
" much ſervice, has read a great deal, and digeſted well
" what he has read. It is not leſs certain, that he embark-
" ed with the warmeſt zeal for the great American cauſe,
" and it has never been inſinuated, unleſs by thoſe who
" have the talent of confounding cauſes, that his zeal has
" diminiſhed. His recompenſe has been, what? He has
" loſt his commiſſion; he has been refuſed the common
" certificate, which every officer receives at the expiration
" of his ſervices, unleſs his delinquencies have been very
" ſubſtantial indeed. And, for what crime? For none, by
" any law, or the moſt ſtrained conſtruction that can be put
" on any law. The reaſons given are ſo far from being
" ſubſtantial, that they really ought to reflect honor on his
" character. It ſeems he has been accuſed of writing a
" letter to a confidential friend, communicating an opinion,
" that the commander in chief was not equal to the great
" taſk he was charged with. Is this a crime? The con-
" trary. If it was really his opinion, it was decent, it was
" honeſt, it was laudable, it was his duty. Does it come
" under any article of war? I may venture to affirm that
" it does not. God help the community that ſhould be
" abſurd enough to frame a law which could be conſtrued
" into ſuch a ſenſe; ſuch a community could not long ſub-
" ſiſt. It ever has been, and ever ought to be, the cuſtom
" in all armies, not abſolutely barbarians, for the officers

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" of high rank minutely to canvaſs the meaſures of their " commander in chief; and if his faults or miſtakes appear " to them many and great, to communicate their ſentiments " to each other; it can be attended with no one bad con- " ſequence; for if the criticiſms are unjuſt and impertinent, " they only recoil on the authors, and the great man who " is the ſubject of them, ſhines with redoubled luſtre. But " if they are well founded, they tend to open the eyes of " the prince or ſtate, who, from blind prejudice, or ſome " ſtrange infatuation, may have repoſed their affairs in " hands ruinouſly incapable. Does any man of ſenſe, who " is the leaſt acquainted with hiſtory, imagine that the " greateſt generals the world ever produced have eſcaped " cenſure? Hannibal, Cæſar, Turenne, Marlborough, have " all been cenſured; and the only method they thought " juſtifiable, of ſtopping the mouths of their cenſors, was " by a freſh exertion of their talents, and a perpetual ſeries " of victories. Indeed it is obſervable, that in proportion " to the capacity or incapacity of the commander in chief, " he countenances or diſcountenances the whole tribe of " tale-bearers, informers, and pickthanks, who ever have " been, and ever will be, the bane of thoſe courts and " armies where they are encouraged or even ſuffered. Al- " lowing general Waſhington to be poſſeſſed of all the vir- " tues and military talents of Epaminondas, and this is " certainly allowing a great deal; for whether from our " modern education, or perhaps the modern ſtate of human " affairs, it is difficult to conceive that any mortal in theſe " ages, ſhould arrive at ſuch perfection; but allowing it to " be ſo, he would ſtill remain mortal, and of courſe ſubject " to the infirmities of human nature; ſickneſs, or other " caſualties, might impair his underſtanding, his memory, " or his courage; and in conſequence of this failure, he " might adopt meaſures apparently weak, ridiculous, and " pernicious. Suppoſing this poſſible caſe, whether a law, " the letter or ſpirit of which ſhould abſolutely ſeal up the " lips, and reſtrain the pens of every witneſs of the defec- " tion, would it not in fact be denouncing vengeance

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" againſt thoſe who alone have the means in their power " of ſaving the public from the ruin impending, if they " ſhould dare to make uſe of theſe means for its ſalvation. " If there were ſuch a law, its abſurdity would be ſo mon- " ſtrouſly glaring, that we may hardly ſay, it would be " more honored in the breach than in the obſervance. In " the Engliſh and French armies, the freedom with which " the conduct and meaſures of commanders in chief are " canvaſſed, is notorious; nor does it appear that this free- " dom is attended with any bad conſequences: it has never " been once able to remove a real great officer from his " command. Every action of the duke of Marlborough " (every body who has read muſt know) was not only " minutely criticiſed, but his whole conduct was diſſected, " in order to diſcover ſome crime, blunder, fault, or even " trifling error; but all theſe impertinent pains and wicked " induſtry were employed in vain; it was a court intrigue " alone that ſubverted him.

" General Wolfe, with whom to be compared it can be " no degradation to any mortal living, was not merely " criticiſed, but groſsly calumniated by ſome officers of " high rank under him; but that great man never thought " of having recourſe to the letter or conſtruction of any " law, in order to avenge himſelf; he was contented with " informing his calumniators, that he was not ignorant of " their practices, and that the only method he ſhould take " for their puniſhment, would be an active perſeverance in " the performance of his duty, which, with the aſſiſtance " of God, he made no doubt would place him beyond the " reach of their malice. As to what liberties they had " taken with him perſonally, he ſhould wait till he was " reduced to the rank of a private gentleman, and then " ſpeak to them in that capacity.

" Upon the whole, it appears that it never was under- " ſtood to be the meaning of the Engliſh article of war, " which enjoins reſpect towards the commander in chief;

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" and of courſe it ought not to be underſtood, that the " meaning of that article of the American code, (which is " a ſervile copy from the Engliſh,) is meant to preſcribe " the communication of our ſentiments to one another, on " the capacity or incapacity of the man on whom the miſ- " ery or ruin of the ſtate depends; its intention was, with- " out doubt, in part complimentary, and partly to lay ſome " decent reſtrictions on the licenſe of converſation and writ- " ing, which otherwiſe might create a diffidence in the " minds of the common ſoldiery, detrimental to the public " ſervice. But that it was meant to impoſe a dead, torpid " ſilence, in all caſes whatever, on men, who, from their " rank, muſt be ſuppoſed to have eyes and underſtanding, " nothing under the degree of an ideot, can perſuade him- " ſelf; but admitting, in oppoſition to common ſenſe and " all precedents, the proceeding to be criminal; admitting " Mr. Conway guilty of it, to the extent repreſented, which " he can demonſtrate to be falſe; in the name of God, " why inflict the higheſt, at leaſt negative puniſhment, on a " man untried, and unheard? The refuſal of a certificate " of having honeſtly ſerved, is conſidered as the greateſt of " negative puniſhments; indeed in the military idea, it is a " poſitive one.

" And I ſincerely hope, and do firmly believe, (ſuch is " my opinion of the juſtice of congreſs,) that when they " have coolly reflected on the merits and fortunes of this " gentleman, they will do him that juſtice, which nothing " but the haſty miſconſtruction of a law haſtily copied from " another law, never defined nor underſtood, has hitherto " prevented."

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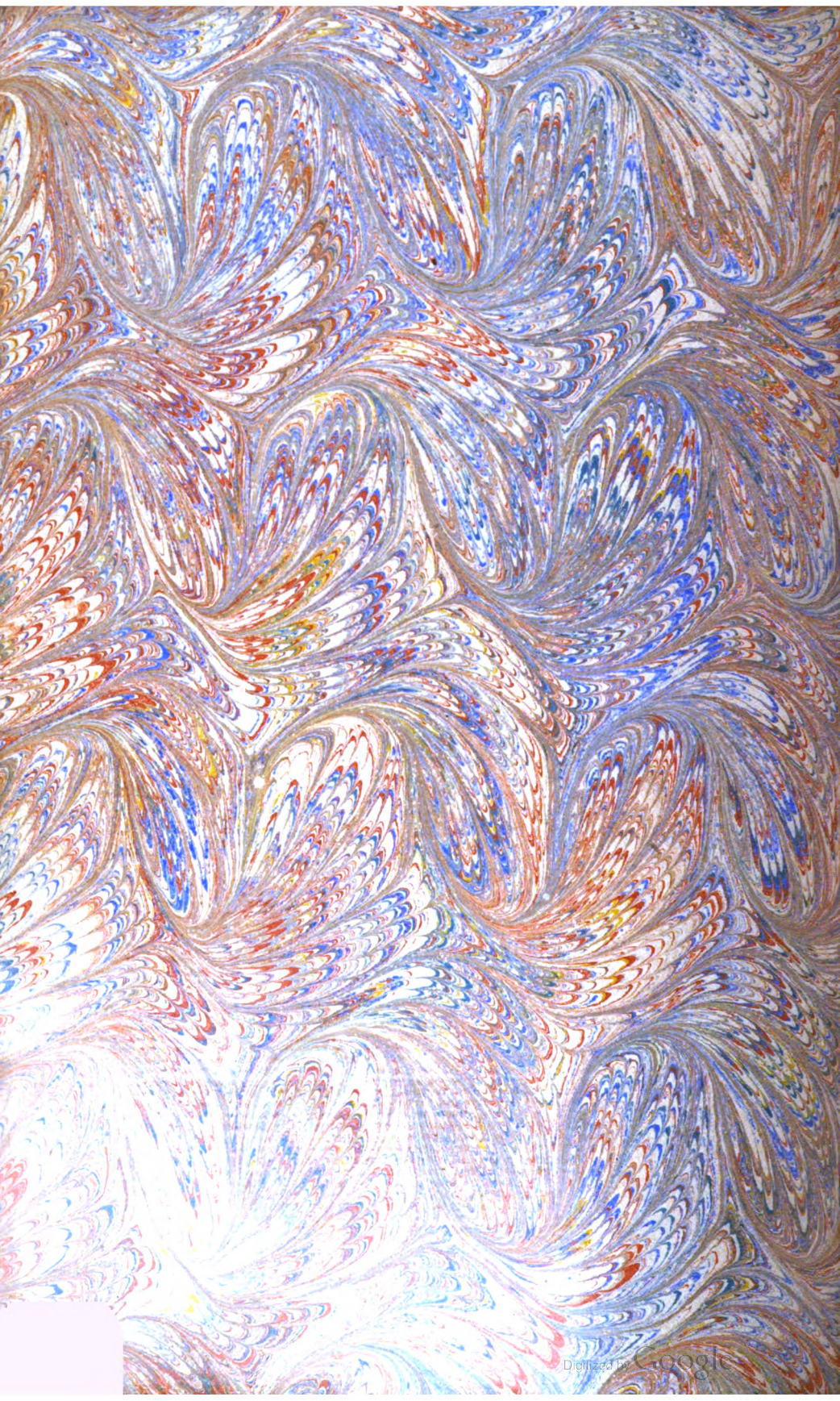
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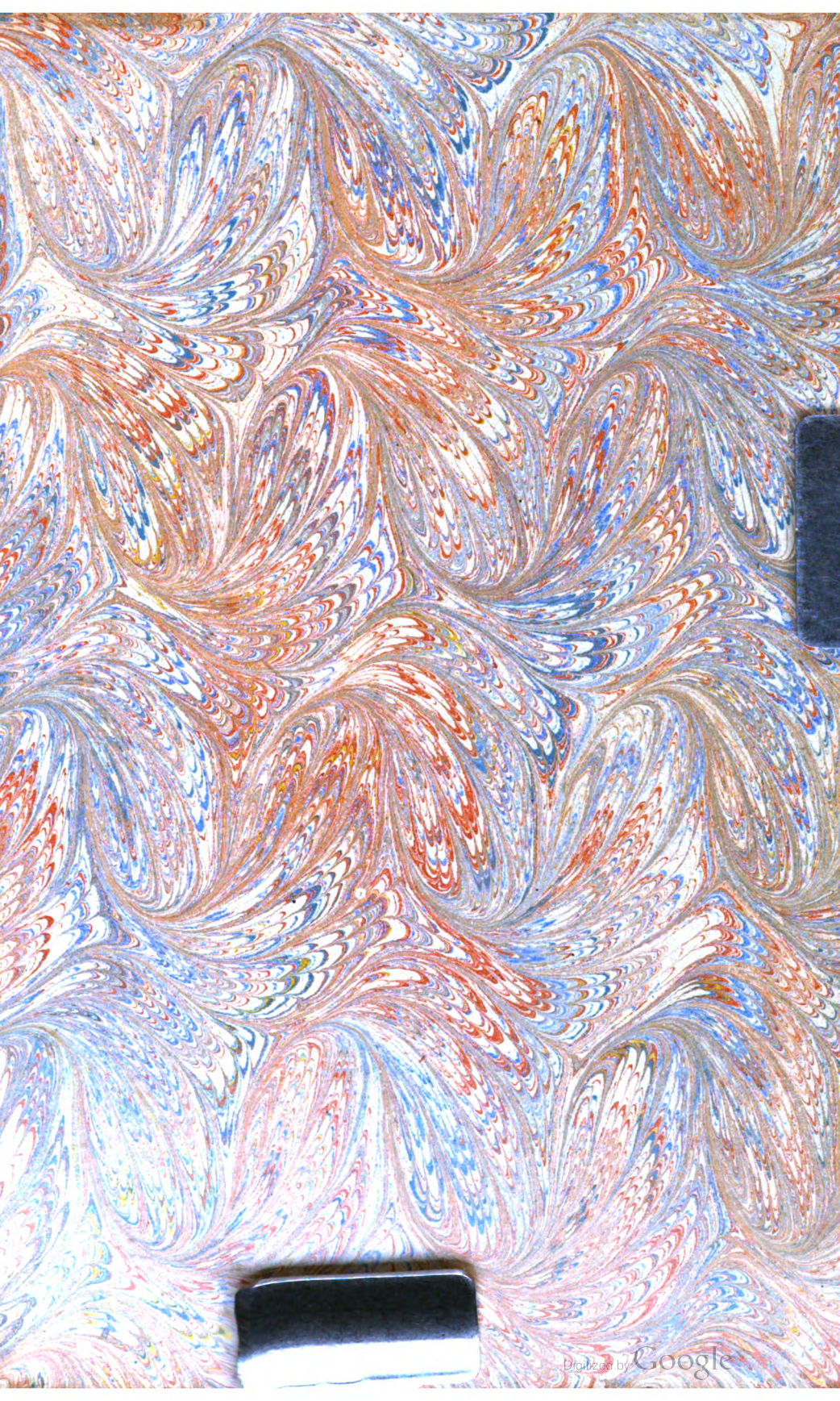
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